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RUSKIN'S VIEWS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

JOHN RUSKIN

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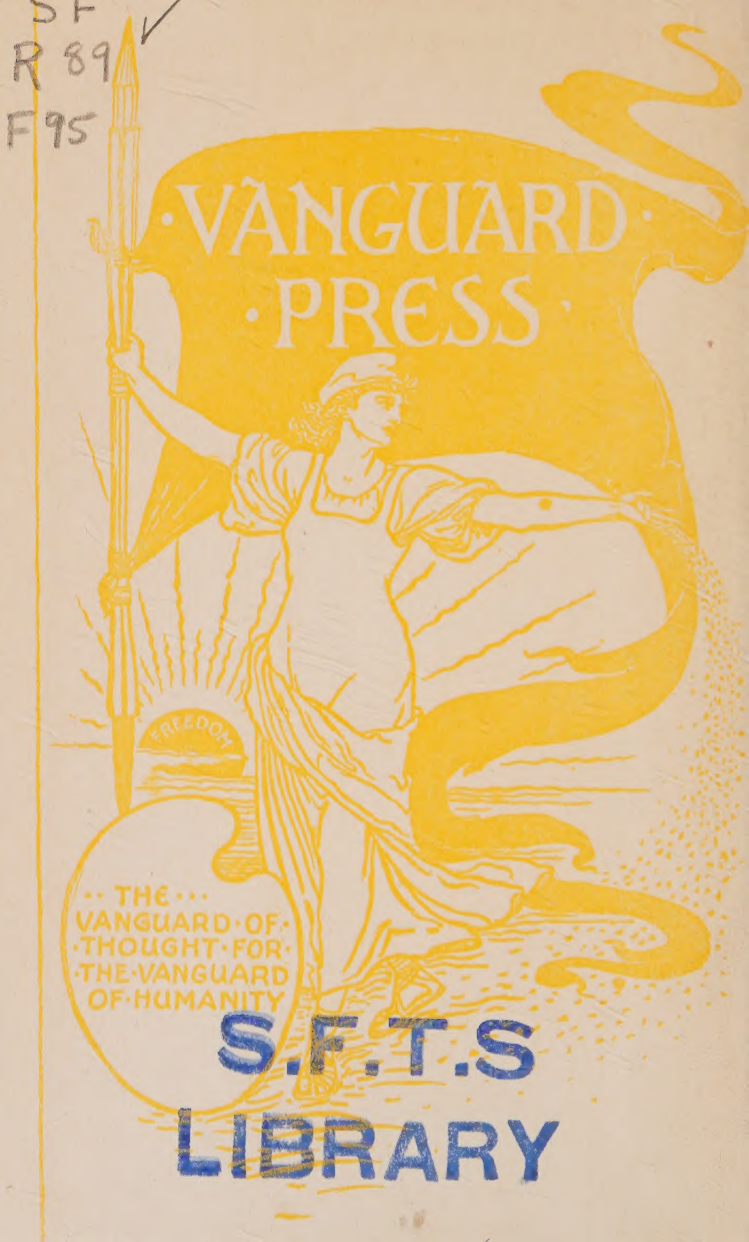

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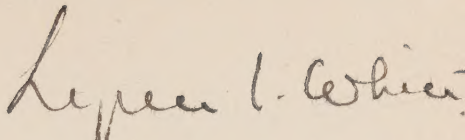

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Ruskin's Views of Social Justice

JOHN RUSKIN

Edited and Introduction by
JAMES FUCHS

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INTRODUCING JOHN RUSKIN
THE ECONOMIST

INTRODUCING JOHN RUSKIN THE ECONOMIST

I

In the society we live in—a commonwealth of Western nations founding itself upon competitive commerce and, in the last instance, ruled by it—nothing is easier, nothing more natural to a numerous and daily growing minority of sensitive, thinking men and women, than to reject in theory capitalist society and its works altogether and to strive—feebly or energetically—for a better, juster alternative. The total number of these men and women—Socialists, Anarchists, Single Taxers, and so forth—is smallest in the country of the most numerous chances for purely individual economic betterment. But even in these United States their number is perceptibly growing, as the chances for such betterment grow scarcer and vaguer and more harshly conditioned with every succeeding year. A furious, long-continued outcry against radicals of all kinds is the natural accompaniment of this shift in the living conditions of American bourgeois society. This outcry, begun in 1919, simply means that American capitalism does not put its trust any longer in the comparatively plentiful chances for economic rise which it created in former times for the common run of people. Instead of bribing all of them into acquiescence, by a lottery full of alluring prizes, it must now terrorize a good many of them, for want of sufficiently safe and numerous bribes to go around. The physical and moral disorders of American capitalism are increasing every day, and the chances of an individual rise grow less dependable, less valuable, and more obviously degrading—hence an increase in the number of radicals and in the fury with which they are assailed by a compact majority of conformers.

It must not be supposed that radicals, in America or elsewhere, are generally the worst-treated victims of the society they assail in its foundations. Their bulk, on the contrary, must always and necessarily consist of people who are, to a certain extent, the beneficiaries of capitalist society, even if the benefit is limited to a mere opportunity to become articulate through acquirement of a roughly adequate education. In characterizing the radical minority of shareholders in Western civilizations, I have advisedly used in the foregoing such terms as "sensitive, thinking men and women." They are at least sufficiently *sensitive* to feel, in their own persons or vicariously, the manifold griefs and hurts of capitalism; and—though thinking is far from being a popular pastime as yet—they are (like Mrs. Reginald Wilfer in *Our Mutual Friend*) "sometimes a little given to it"—at least sufficiently so to perceive that the time is fast approaching when capitalism and civilization can't both survive—when one or the other must go down. All radicals are united in the ardent wish to maintain the latter and get rid of the former, yet disunited in their factious disputes over two issues—how to preserve civilization and wherewith to replace capitalism. Of the radicals who proposed, three quarters of a century ago, to replace it by a revival of feudal society, brought up to date and purged of its blemishes, only two survive to this day in their published works—Carlyle and his worshipping disciple, John Ruskin.

What is the present status of the latter, this side of the Atlantic? Let us see. America gets—and always did get—much of its mental food from Europe. The imported article—whatever its kind—may have changed in transit and in its American assimilation into something rich and strange, but to deny its European origin is a mere nationalist vanity of vanities. The concepts of American capitalism and radicalism are both variants of corresponding European—chiefly British—notions, at least in their essence. In the American application of these concepts, capitalism is far more original than radicalism, for pretty obvious reasons: the material conditions

of American capitalist production and distribution are surprisingly different, but their ultimate outcome in social mismanagement—the theme of radical criticism—is at bottom the same as in other highly developed industrial countries. Capitalism, in its main effects if not in its workings, is the same the world over, and an intelligent American is at no loss to understand the message of a man like Ruskin. His complete works are still of fairly wide circulation among certain groups of the American middle classes, whose approach to radicalism—like Ruskin's—is chiefly esthetic. Bulk and price alike debar these books from wide circulation. Hence this little volume as a first introduction, which may here and there awaken a wish for closer acquaintance.

II

To John Ruskin, one of the grandest personalities of the Victorian age, "moralist" and "political economist" were convertible terms. A Scotchman by parentage and rearing, he was in all probability the most versatile mind of his own race and generation. A veritable King Solomon of Gladstone's and Disraeli's England, he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. He knew more—and wrote more, and to better purpose—of the leaves of trees and the clouds of the sky, their colors, shapes, formation and natural history, than any other man before or after him. He was *not*—like most other literary celebrities of his age and country—a man who could turn his hand to nothing but lettered pursuits. Like William Morris, he was a Jack-of-many-trades: a painter, botanist, geologist, roadmender, architect, horticulturist—in short, a miracle of wide-awake vitality energizing in a dozen different directions.

To re-introduce such a prismatic personality to a new generation of American readers in *one* of his many aspects exclu-

sively—to present him in a preface to selected passages from his multifarious writings—and in the passages themselves—as a moralist, that is to say, a political economist only, would seem to be a wrong done to a brilliantly versatile personality. The charge, if ever made, would be invalid for two reasons: first, because our author considered himself primarily a political economist—he says so himself, in more than one passage in his writings. Secondly, if the present selections—as I dare hope—will tempt many readers to turn to Ruskin's complete writings, they will find that the author's estimate of himself, though erroneous in the main, was at least justified to this extent: political economy—of a most strange and peculiar pattern—was his King Charles' Head. He could not write about the Italian painters, the churches of Venice, the cathedrals of France, the birds of England, the leaves of common trees, the prince-electors of Prussia, or the fiction of his day, without dropping into political economy rather more frequently and more lengthily than Mr. Silas Wegg did into poetry. His writings are of immense extent—more than 10,000 closely printed pages in the Dana Estes edition!—yet this small collection gives the essence of the *Man*, his heart of hearts, for in his own consciousness he stood forth, first and foremost, as a radical reconstructor of society, and in that light he is exhibited in this little volume.

III

It is one of the curious effects of our modern printing press and our rapid means of communication—both held in life-long scorn by John Ruskin—that palpable untruths, by sheer force of endless repetition and dissemination can fasten upon the minds of successive generations in five continents, until they become wellnigh indestructible items in the list of the "things everybody knows." Thus, for instance, "everybody knows," that John Ruskin was a Socialist. He is acclaimed as such, wherever a Socialist movement exists. A colony of

American Socialists—in Tennessee, of all places!—was christened after him. Militant Socialism in England has made of him a calendar saint, claiming him for an intellectual progenitor of the Blatchfords and Hyndmans and Tilletts of our own day—and this in the face of the plain fact, verifiable at any time by consulting his published writings, that Ruskin, at no time in his life, *called* himself a Socialist—or *was* a Socialist without calling himself one—or ever had, for the two varieties of Social Democratic movements known to him, viz. British Chartism and French Socialism culminating in the Paris Commune of 1871, anything save dislike and open denunciation!

The determined hostility of John Ruskin against popular insurrections as a means of righting public wrongs is a sufficiently important trait of his mentality to warrant a brief substantiation from his works. The year 1848, with its rapid series of revolutions, was the true birth-year of civil liberties on the European Continent—the birth-year of peasant emancipation in Central Europe—a year of the most fruitful consequences for the development of European burgher-society —yet a decade after the great upheaval, in 1857, Ruskin wrote in "A Joy For Ever": "Do you think the perpetual fear of revolution . . . that clouds and encumbers the nations of Europe, is eventually profitable for *us*? Were we any the better of the course of affairs in '48? . . . Not so. But every stake that you could hold in the stability of the Continent . . . would have tenfold reaction on the prosperity of England." And this of the birth-year of modern civilization, the year that brought to the fore Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, Kossuth, Liebknecht, Alexander Herzen, Victor Hugo, Freiligrath, Mazzini, Microslawski, and a host of other great libertarians from Lisbon to Warsaw! When the Paris Commune, in the final despair of its life-and-death struggle against the invading slaveholders of Versailles, took to the torch, the author of *Fors Clavigera* wrote: "I thought the Louvre belonged to me as much as to the Parisians, and expected they would have sent word over to me, being an Art Professor, to

ask whether I wanted it burnt down. But no message or intimation to that effect ever reached me . . . the next bit of new coinage in the way of notion which I have picked up in Paris streets, is the present meaning of the French word *Ouvrier,* which in my time the dictionaries used to give as *Workman.* For again, I have spent many days, not to say years, with the workingmen of our English school myself; and I know that with the more advanced of them, the gathering word is . . . 'To do good work, whether we live or die.' Whereas I perceive the gathering, or rather *scattering* word of the French 'ouvrier' is: 'To *un*do good work, whether we live or die.' Behold in the above-quoted lines the sole obituary by a supposed Socialist written in *Fors Clavigera* of July, 1871, in dishonor of the greatest struggle of militant labor that occurred within his lifetime! In an unashamed, outspoken way, he preferred "European stability" to a Magna Charta of civil liberties throughout Europe, and lamented over a few pictures destroyed, assailing the character of 15,000 heroic Parisian workmen slain. In view of such utterances the sorrowing exclamation addressed by the Austrian poet Seide in 1848 to his demented fellow-poet Lenan would seem to be applicable to Ruskin:

> . . . *Nein, du bist nicht zu retten,*
> *Die Ketten fallen nicht von deinem Sinn*
> *Beim Klang von eines Volk's gesprengten Ketten!*

(Nay, thou art past all hope, if not the thunder—Of chains this nation wore and ruptured now—Can burst the chains shackling thy mind asunder!)

Not insurrection only, but universal suffrage, too, was a lifelong object of scorn and aversion to our militant Victorian. In his younger years, it was pressed upon Parliament (in 1839), by a monster-petition, as the one great remedy for social ills. In his ripe manhood, a measure halfways approaching it was carried (in 1867) by Disraeli. In his old age, the Social Democracy of England was eagerly urging it. To the

young Ruskin, the Chartist agitation of 1839 was the satanic outcrop of a devilish system of society. The middle-aged Ruskin wrote, in the midst of the turbulent reform movement of 1867, twenty-five letters to a workingman (published, the same year, under the title "Time and Tide") to dissuade him and other workers within reach of his influence from placing any faith in the benefits of parliamentary reform; and in his old age, a year or two before his death, Ruskin growled at Leonard Abbott: "So far from wishing to extend parliamentary suffrage, I would take it from most of those who possess it." He was all his life a positive man with a positive manner, but never more brash and decided than in his rejection of the franchise for the masses.

To understand Ruskin and the system of feudal ethics he called his political economy, the assured fact must be kept in mind, that neither he nor anyone else among the great luminaries of Victoria's early and middle reign had any sympathy with radical labor movements. Some of the lesser lights of that age (Kingsley, Maurice, etc.) essayed a mild flirtation with Chartism, with the intent of blunting its edge and deflecting its force—hence that queer little English movement of the Fifties called Christian Socialism, which, as Harrison in his Ruskin Biography drily remarked, was neither Christian nor Socialism. The movement never reached the highest mountain peaks of the Victorian intellect, nor did it ever have a hold on the British masses. Its leaders—though otherwise not to be mentioned in the same breath with Ruskin, Dickens, Thackeray, Macaulay, Carlyle or Sydney Smith—had this in common with their betters: a British labour movement militantly arraying the working against the appropriating classes of the realm—a labour movement completely independent of gentlemanly guidance—a labour movement giving birth to a new proletarian civilization based upon a class struggle against the gentlemen of England—such a movement was simply unthinkable to all of them, suns and satellites, first-raters and second-grades, Whigs and Tories alike. Neither Carlyle nor Dickens, neither Ruskin nor Macaulay nor Sydney Smith

could ever conceive of such a thing as a self-emancipation of labour organized in fighting trade unions, clamoring for the franchise, and openly proclaiming their levelling intent, except perhaps as a momentary delusion of the workers enmeshed by the wiles of Satan. (Satan, of course, being epresented by "rabid, self-seeking agitators.") To Sydney Smith, the working masses were an ignorant rabble, which he instructed in one of his treatises to be content with their lot and to tip their hats respectfully before the Squire and his relations. Look up "Hard Times," by Dickens, a book that appeared in the early Fifties, and in many ways an admirable story; read the chapters dealing with labour and labour troubles; read the absurd characterisation of the wicked trade union agitator and of that lay-figure plainly representing Dickens' idea of a just workingman made perfect—and then close the book, vicariously ashamed of having surprised a great man in an aspect of imbecility. Yet "Hard Times," despite its denunciation of trade-union agitators, was actually denounced by Macaulay, in his diary, as wicked socialism—merely because Dickens ventured, in that story, to ridicule a parcel of purse-proud North-of-England manufacturers and to protest against the nursery language of the gentry, when addressing full-grown toilers! When some of the Chartist leaders had to undergo political imprisonment, Carlyle, in a sham-radical pamphlet, spat into their faces like an irate llama. The problem of the emancipation of the American Negro was to him—and to his disciple Ruskin, too—a "Nigger Question." The American Civil War (according to Marx, "the one grand event of the nineteenth century") was, in effect, the emancipation of the black worker from individual slavery—yet the shafts of Carlyle, Ruskin and Dickens levelled against the Union cause are witness, to this day, of the utter incapacity of the most notable Victorian minds to conceive of salvation by means of revolution. There was no salvation for the workers, white or black, that they could conceive of—save to be ordered about by gentlemen, and to follow them unswervingly, even if the order—like Ruskin's—was an Exodus

from the Machine Age into a machineless Utopia of renovated Middle Ages.

IV

THREE questions naturally arise in the mind of the reader: if Ruskin detested revolution as a means of social melioration —if, as a vehicle of it, he refused to recognize the franchise, trade unionism, Negro emancipation, or any form of class struggle—on what grounds can he properly be designated then as a radical? Secondly, why was he bitterly assailed, during his life-time, by the British bourgeoisie, and finally: why is his memory held in affectionate regard by modern radical labor movements that found themselves upon everything he held in scorn: freedom of the press, productivity of machines, quick means of communication, trade unionism, universal suffrage, and a good many other objects of his disesteem?

The first of these questions can be briefly disposed of—it is purely founded upon a defective, because too narrow, definition. *Radix* is a Latin word, meaning *root*—and a radical is an uprooter—one who strikes at the roots of a society, in an effort to replace it by another. In the common usage of newspapers and political meetings, radicalism practically always means uprooting for the purpose of *innovation*, not reconstruction of a real or imaginary past. But in the abstract significance of the word, a radical is a radical, whether his uprooting be the first step leading to a *Novum Organon* or to the re-erection of an ancient structure. There are consequently reactionary radicals as well as revolutionary ones, and to the first-mentioned species John Ruskin belonged throughout his adult life.

The second question: why, during his life-time, the British bourgeoisie made of him a target of ridicule and, on one occasion, of petty persecution, requires a somewhat more searching answer, including a brief characterization of his art-work and of that bourgeoisie in the Fifties and Sixties.

The ruling classes of England consist, roughly speaking,

of two social groups: the great landed proprietors (including the Anglican Church Establishment) and the leaders of commerce and industry. They *are* the ruling classes, in a political sense, on the strength of a compact between the two divisions dating back to 1688, when the transfer of actual sovereignty from King to Parliament became an accomplished fact. The compact—a tacit one, grounded in parliamentary representation—admitted at first the wealthy merchants and manufacturers to a humble share in the rule exercised by the landed nobility and gentry over the masses of peasants, workers and petty tradesmen. For a hundred years and longer, this share of the bourgeoisie in the government of the country remained a humble one, until the rising wealth and importance of merchants and factory owners, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, forced a new compromise upon the landed oligarchy in 1832, in the shape of a parliamentary reform, suppressing a number of pocket boroughs, enfranchising the great industrial towns, allotting new seats to commercial centers already enfranchised, and in this manner providing for a handsome share of the newly rich in the parliamentary government of the country. The political history of Great Britain since 1832 is, in the main, the reflex of the clashing economic interests of the two divisions of privilege, but not altogether so. Officially, the two divisions, in their governmental quality of "ins" and "outs," are supposed to be grimly antagonistic. Their long-drawn squabbles, however, quickly give way to a "unity front" of privilege, whenever British class-rule is threatened by a rising from below, and the "unity front" is usually formed at the expense of a timid bourgeoisie leaving the management of the common defense against mob-insurgency to their elder brothers, the party of the landed proprietors, formerly called Tories and, in our own days, Conservatives. That is a development which we are witnessing now, since the post-war rise of the Labour Party—privilege trembles, and the Tories are consequently on top. The same thing happened during the Chartist agitation, when the

frightened Liberals were acclaiming the old Duke of Wellington as Saviour of Society, and once or twice thereafter.

Apart from these intervals of *burgfrieden,* the political quarrels of "the agricultural interest" and "the commercial interest" rose frequently to serious heights of passion during the early and middle reign of the Queen. When the privileged orders fall out—as they did in England during the agitation for the Factory Acts (1833), the Corn Law quarrel (ending in 1846), and the Crimean War (1854-56)—the masses do not come into their own, but they come into possession of illuminating information. As for instance:

Thirty years of parliamentary squabbles (1830-1860) of the "agricultural" (Tory) against the "commercial" (Whig) interests had brought to light, in the reports of debates and the Blue Books of Royal Commissions, to what pass the rising factory system had brought Merrie England. How it had polluted its brooks and rivers with chemicals and foul offal and its skies with the smoke of ten thousand industrial infernos. How it made for disease and death, the crippling of men, the barrenness of wives, the arrested development of little children. What it did to the very bones of the unborn, begotten upon the bodies of exhausted women. How the lint of the great textile hells, the heat of the foundries, the dirt and dust of paper-mills and binderies, the inhumanly long hours of Yorkshire and Lancashire plants, made drunkards out of temperate men. How the owners were fighting factory inspection tooth and nail—and so on, and so forth, a long indictment against industrialism rampant, brought forward by Lord Shaftesbury and other Tories, in defense of Old England against the greed of the newly rich. There was a Whig answer to this Tory indictment, along you-are-another lines, which will come in for later mention. At the height of this revealing squabble, in 1860, a man of forty, theretofore known only as a professor of the fine arts, jumped headlong into the fray, with a challenge to everything the economy and statecraft of the British bourgeoisie held sacred. The

name of this newcomer in the arena of Whig-Tory contests was John Ruskin.

V

THERE was an omen in the year of his nativity—he had been born as son and heir of a very wealthy wine-merchant in 1819, a year of many labour-riots in England and Scotland and severe repressive measures against the rioters. On the other hand, there was nothing in the peaceful current of his boyhood or young manhood foreshadowing the future radical of retrogressive politics and economics. His parents had predestined him, before his birth, for a clerical career, but were content to let him have his own way, when, after graduating at Oxford in 1842, he chose to become a student and teacher of the fine arts. They took the ailing youth, both before and after his graduation, on extended journeys to France, to Switzerland, to Italy, seeking only to build up his failing health and leaving him in all other things to the drift of his self-chosen art-studies. He studied diligently, in a pouncing and somewhat irregular way, the art-relics of the Middle Ages and the Age of Reformation, together with the social and political settings which, according to his imaginative reconstruction, brought them forth.

The young British art student examined attentively—and afterwards, in three voluminous standard works, described minutely—the paintings, monuments and buildings, the goldsmiths' work and the utensils preserved from a feudal past. Of all things *tangible* and *visible* he was the most observant of men, with a beautiful gift of luminous description which never left him, from youth to extreme old age. Whatever sharply peering eyes, an overdeveloped instinct of veneration and a limpid, graceful English style could do, in the way of making his works on art worth while, they did, transmitting them safely to an admiring posterity. But this lynx-eyed surveyor of the tangible legacy of the Middle Ages could not reconstruct mediaeval realities in Italy and France, because

he brought a distorted image of the Middle Ages ready-made from England to Italy—a domestic atmosphere saturated with the sham-mediaevalism of Walter Scott and the Tory tradition of "our best county families." "I am," he wrote in his old age (*Praeterita*, Ch. I), "and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school—Walter Scott's, that is to say, and Homer's." With the conventions of Sir Walter in his head and travelling-bag, he confronted the art treasures of Italy and France, trying to grope his way back into the feudal past of both. To be plain, he was totally bereft of any trace of that critical acumen, that ability to unearth and to interlink true motives, that makes for skill in reconstructing defunct societies. His Middle Ages were a Tory wish-dream which he brought with him from England to Italy and carried back, re-enforced by a thousand real or imaginary supports, from Italy to England. There was, of course, some substance to his dream, as there is to most dreams. He was deeply impressed by the superior craftsmanship of the mediaeval guilds, showing in their handiwork. He examined minutely a great many objects of art, many of them beautiful and all made with care, of solid material. The lasting quality of the old palaces, cloisters and town-halls filled him with boundless admiration. There, indeed, was forethought of eternity in stone and marble, as contrasted with the gypsy makeshifts of modern building! There, in the *palpable* Middle Ages before him, was pride in handicraft and achievement in brass and copper, in silver and gold, outlasting time! The impalpable Middle Ages were invisible to his mind's eye, except in the distortions of romantic literature: the pervading serfdom, the widespread beggary, the thousand and one petty wars continually destroying the substance of the masses, the all but universal filth, the filth diseases and their fearful sweep, the maddening exactions of feudal lords and lordlings without number, the oppressions of the Church, the cult of ignorance, the dog's life of the peasantry, the general lawlessness and insecurity in the midst of clashing authorities and prerogatives, the grotesque, unbeautiful dress of men and

women and the tyranny of local custom unmitigated by contact with foreign parts—all these were as nothing to Ruskin in his view of the Middle Ages. His retrospect saw nothing but a society based upon lawful authority and producing beautiful, substantial things under the shadow of its protection. That was the concept of the Middle Ages he brought from England to Italy; that was the concept, strengthened by supposed proof and cumulative evidence, be brought back from Italy to England. As time went on, it hardened into the fighting conviction, that Old England could not be saved from perdition, except through restoring an authoritative, mediaeval society on English soil. Before definitely committing himself to a forty years' war against a social system based upon competitive commerce, the finished art-critic made his name famous by attaching it to three masterpieces entitled: *Modern Painters* (Vol. I, 1843—Vol. II, 1846—Vol. III and IV, 1856—Vol. V, 1860), *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849) and *Stones of Venice* (3 vols., 1851-1853). The immense amount of information contained in these nine massive volumes, the wide-awake circumspectness of their descriptive detail, and the glow and fervor of their diction made the author a national celebrity of steadily increasing fame, as volume after volume saw the light of day. In the early Fifties the handsome young man was already a somewhat shy lion of the London *salons*. He had been highly praised by Sydney Smith in 1843, hailed, as a gifted fellow-Scot, by Carlyle, and was made much of by many men and women of the first consideration. The social protest and the moralizing reflections with which he sprinkled his art-work of the Forties and Fifties, were considered queer but harmless eccentricities in a famous young Oxford man of thirty, with plenty of money, suave manners, good connections and indubitably aristocratic leanings. The general drift and character of his early art-work, and certain specific passages therein, foreshadowed the future prophet, crying out in the Victorian wilderness against competitive commerce and its laws, but, as yet, called forth no counterblast—only cordial appreciation

from like-minded moralists. When the first volume of *Stones of Venice* appeared, early in 1851, Carlyle made the author happy by the following felicitation: "A strange, unexpected, and, I believe, most true and excellent *Sermon in Stones,* as well as the best piece of school-mastering in Architectonics, from which I hope to learn in a great many ways. The spirit and purpose of these critical studies of yours are a singular sign of the times to me, and a very gratifying one. Right good speed to you, and victorious arrival on the farther shore! It is a quite new 'Renaissance,' I believe, we are getting into just now; either towards new, *wider* manhood, high again as the eternal stars, or else into final death, and the mask of Gehenna for evermore!" The note of social protest in the book reverberated in the ears of Frederic Harrison, half a century after its appearance:

"The fine enthusiasm with which, again and again, in the *Stones of Venice* Ruskin pleads the cause of the freedom of the workman from the degrading monotony of mechanical repetition, has had indirect effects far and wide, in places which are not devoted to debate of architectural styles. It is the obvious introduction to his second career of . . . reformer, which began eight or ten years later." Obvious as that introduction was, it didn't arouse any notable apprehension. The years following the repression of the revolutionary movements of 1848-49 were excellent business years for British trade, and 1851—the publication year of *Stones,* Vol. I,—was the year of the Crystal Palace Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations, "the first undertaking of its sort in the history of the universe." I gather a few echoes of those happy days from the N. Y. Times: Queen Victoria called the exhibition "the peace festival which unites the industry of all nations of the earth." Thackeray called it "the grandest and most cheerful, the brightest and most splendid show that eyes had ever looked on since the creation of the world." Incidentally, one in every twenty Englishmen in 1850 was a pauper. A committee of inquiry, the year before, had found distressing evidence in the London slums; on Saffron Hill

twenty-five people lived in one small room, 126 in a single house; the evils of child slavery in the factories were not yet wholly abated; 50,000 people had died of cholera in England and Wales in 1850. These trifling drawbacks didn't interfere with the universal rejoicing of commerce glorified and its retainers, high and low; the motto was: on with the dance, let joy be unconfined! British Philistia was happy—it had neither time nor inclination to quarrel with a schoolmaster over heretical economics, wrapped up in the gaudy tinfoil of discourses on art.

The mention of Thackeray brings us straight to the turning point in Ruskin's career. In 1860, British Philistia was anything but happy. Business was bad, the stupid Crimean venture, the frightful Indian Mutiny and a bloody war on Italian soil had caused no end of commercial and governmental trouble in England, and the Continent was supposed to be on the verge of another revolution. There was an outbreak of hysterics in the air of London, and the artist John Ruskin, by unmasking and stepping into the public arena as political economist, supplied the occasion. His friend Thackeray was then editor of the *Cornhill Magazine,* a mildly entertaining, well-liked periodical not theretofore suspect of any political or economic heresies. Picture the dismay of the good citizens of London, when they found one day in their *Cornhill* the first of a series of essays by J. R., beginning with this portentous sentence:

"Among the delusions which at different periods have possessed themselves of the minds of large masses of the human race, perhaps the most curious—certainly the least creditable—is the modern so-called science of political economy, based on the idea that an advantageous code of social action may be determined irrespectively of the influence of social affection." Among the readers of the Philadelphia *Saturday Evening Post* the appearance on the editorial page of a discourse by Eugene V. Debs could not cause a more heartfelt consternation than this opening sentence of a *Cornhill* article occasioned among the substantial citizens of London town. A Ghetto anecdote

may perhaps throw light upon their feelings: the Chief-Rabbi of Prague summoned before him one of his flock defamed of atheism. "My son, I am told that you don't believe in God." —"No, Sir, I don't."—"But, bethink yourself, my son: everyone, even the great Rothschild, believes in God."—"But, Sir, I don't believe in Rothschild either."—The Rabbi, scarcely trusting his ears: "What!!? You don't believe in *Rothschild??* Why, then you are an *atheist!!* Out of my sight, and never darken my door again!!" Here was a pampered scion of Society, an Oxford man whose wife had been presented at Court, son of a city merchant worth 200,000 pounds if a penny, who did not believe in Adam Smith, in Ricardo, in the Manchester doctrine of *laissez faire,* in production for gain, in the taking of interest, in commissions, competition, fixing of wages according to the law of supply and demand, buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest—in short, an atheist affronts the entire pantheon of the Stock Exchange and the factory districts! Just listen to this: "The art of making yourself rich is the art of keeping your neighbour poor.

. . . That which seems to be wealth may in verity be only the gilded index of far-reaching ruin, a wrecker's handful of coin gleaned from the beach to which he has beguiled an argosy. . . . In a community regulated only by laws of demand and supply, but protected from open violence, the persons who become rich are, generally speaking, industrious, resolute, proud, covetous, prompt, methodical, sensible, unimaginative, insensitive and ignorant. . . ." And the concluding sentence of this bundle of affronts aimed at "our best citizens": "*There is no wealth but Life*—Life, including all its powers of love, of joy, and of admiration. That country is richest which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings."

No wonder the City of London rose against that sort of thing in open rebellion. Such a hailstorm of vociferous protests reached the office of the *Cornhill* after the appearance of three essays, that the unhappy Thackeray had to ask his con-

tributor to conclude the series abruptly with a fourth—which accordingly he did, making the concluding essay the longest and hottest of the four. They were republished two years later in book form, called, after a passage in a parable of Jesus, "Unto This Last." A friend of Carlyle's, the historian J. A. Froude, came then to the rescue of the economist in search of a sheltering periodical that would dare to print his economic heresies. Froude, then editor of *Fraser's Magazine,* admitted —or rather, tried to admit—another Ruskin series of papers in 1862, but, as Harrison tells us, "again the public opposition was so marked, that after the fourth paper they were stopped. They appeared ten years later in book form—six chapters in all—as *Munera Pulveris.*

* * * *

At this critical turn in Ruskin's life (1860-1862), with its story of petty persecution, we may fitly take up the third of the questions enumerated at the outset of the present brevities about Ruskin the economist—the question, why Socialists everywhere and at all times, held him in affectionate regard.

True, he disbelieved in production for gain and believed in production for use. He pointed out the tremendous waste, the essential dishonesty of competitive manoeuvres. He insisted, as a matter of principle, upon the duty of everyone to do manual work. He threw the bourgeoisie into stupefaction by his demand that all workers of the same guild be paid alike, whatever their degree of skill. He made the dismal science a lovely thing by the deeply affecting solemnity with which he declared that unhappy girls and boys void of playful instincts are an indictment to the society that strips them of their right to happiness—not *pursuit* of happiness, as the vapid American thesis has it, but the right of every girl and every boy under the sun to *be* happy! He attacked adulteration of food, jerry-building, the poisoning of streams, the monotonous slavery of unskilled labor, the appalling waste of advertising,

imperialistic wars, the lie that luxury makes for distribution of real wealth. "Violent Tory" though he was, he did not rest content with taking up the usual Tory charges of his time against the captains of industry. He attacked with equal zeal, eloquence and persistence, the squeezing, expropriating practices of the Tory camp—of lords, bishops, deans, and conservative statesmen. He branded, as public enemies, the peers monopolizing huge parts of British soil for the pursuits of sport and turning thousands of peasant-holdings into grazing land for sheep. He denounced rich prelates unwilling to share their bread with the poor under their spiritual care. But all this does not make him a Socialist—nor does it truly answer the question: why Socialists hold him in loving regard.

Perhaps the true answer lies in this: the modern labor movement has this staunch antagonist of the propertied, expropriating classes enshrined in its heart, because of the utter genuineness, the classical simplicity of his character. The daughter of Karl Marx once asked her father: What is your favorite virtue in a hero, and what do you think a hero's most pardonable failing? He promptly answered: Singleheartedness and Gullibility. The answer contains, perhaps, a cue to the Socialist attitude toward Ruskin—he was now and then the most gullible, and always the most singlehearted of men. His father died in 1864, leaving him a fortune of £200,000. He made public declaration that he would—slowly, deliberately, and in his own good time—rid himself of that nuisance of a fortune for the benefit of worthy causes—*and he did*. As Slade Professor of Art at Oxford, he complained about a bad road—and shouldered pick-axe and shovel to mend it, rousing his students to active help in the work of roadmending. He was opposed to vivisection—and when it was introduced at Oxford, he promptly resigned a professorship, which had been the only asset of his pride of rank for many years. Being an admirer of Turner, he lavished his moral and material resources for a stretch of thirty years to get him general recognition. Whatever he did, he did hard—especially when he furthered a great cause. Like most of the grand Victorians

—like Dickens, Burton, Huxley, Macaulay, Froude—he went after public-spirited pursuits with a hammering, John-Bullish insistence, a bee-like diligence, which is invariably appreciated by real workers. In 1871 he set afoot a scheme for the realization of his Tory Utopia of a British nation redeemed from factory drudgery and the manifold frauds of commerce by a voluntary return of all classes to the soil. In the Seventies, to be sure, there were already three times as many Britons as could be maintained by working the native soil—particularly, by working it, as Ruskin would have it, without agricultural machinery. Aslo, the soil, being chiefly the property of the great capitalists, was not available. Something however, he fancied, could be done, by way of an object lesson on a small scale, to show the way out of capitalist misery—and Ruskin proposed to do whatever was immediately feasible. In the initial chapters of his celebrated *Letters to the Workingmen and Labourers of Great Britain* (*Fors Clavigera*—Letters, etc. Four Vols., 1871-1884) "Ruskin expounded the scheme of St. George's Company. He undertook to give a tenth of whatever was then left him (of his fortune), and the tithe of what he might earn afterwards. They were to try to make some small piece of English ground beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful, with no steam-engines on it, and no railroads, with no untended creatures on it; none wretched but the sick; none idle but the dead—no liberty, instant obedience, no equality. In this Utopian Paradise society and industry were to be regulated on strict lines of a newly-ordered scheme. . . . For this new phalanstery Sir Thomas Dyke Acland and Lord Mount Temple consented to be trustees of the Fund. But the public did not respond. At the end of three years only £236, 13 sh. was added to Ruskin's original contribution of £7,000."

"He then set himself to reclaim some of the slum-dwellings in London; and he made an experiment in some nine or ten houses which he put in charge of Miss Octavia Hill, who collected the rents, and in course of that duty learned to know and to improve the tenants. But ultimately he parted with

them for £3,500, all of which sum he gave away to others. . . . Then he took a house in Paddington, and started a tea-shop, to sell pure tea at a fair price, putting an old servant in charge. To the tea was soon added coffee and sugar. And we are told the shop did a good and sound business till Miss Hill took this over also. Then Ruskin started a gang of street sweepers to keep the streets clean. But this Augean-stable task was beyond all the resources of himself, his friends, and his gardener."

There were other activities to rescue society ("behind its back," as Marx once shrewdly observed) from fraud, from dirt, from esthetic illiteracy and competitive strife. But society cannot be rescued by purely individual enterprise. What all these activities came to, is easily guessed. In his old age, the intrepid fighter had achieved only one of the effects he desired—an honorable and not too burdensome poverty, supported by the sale of his works. He died at his country-seat, Brantwood, near Coniston Lake, Jan. 20, 1900, rich in years, in toil, in well-earned laurels and devoted followers. Karl Marx, his contemporary (1818-1883) and fellow-Londoner, did not know him personally, but had a kindly regard for him, as he had—as all true Socialists must have—for the honest and the genuine, the brave and the good, the hard-working and disappointed; and of these John Ruskin was one.

JAMES FUCHS.

New York City, October, 1926.

RUSKIN'S VIEWS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

THE ST. GEORGE EXPERIMENT

THE ST. GEORGE EXPERIMENT

DOCUMENT AND EXPLANATORY PASSAGES FROM "FORS CLAVIGERA"

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

I HAVE not hitherto stated, except in general terms, the design to which these letters point, though it has been again and again defined, and it seems to me explicit enough—the highest possible education, namely, of English men and women living by agriculture in their native land. . . . It is time now to say more clearly what I want them to do.

The substantial wealth of man consists in the earth he cultivates, with its pleasant or serviceable animals and plants, and in the rightly produced work of his own hands. I mean to buy, for the St. George's Company, the first pieces of ground offered to me at fair price (when the subscriptions enable me to give *any* price),—to put them as rapidly as possible into order, and to settle upon them as many families as they can support, of young and healthy persons, on the condition that they do the best they can for their livelihood with their own hands, and submit themselves and their children to the rules written for them.

I do not care where the land is, nor of what quality. I would rather it should be poor, for I want space more than food. I will make the best of it I can, at once, by wage-labour, under the best agricultural advice. It is easy now to obtain good counsel, and many of our landlords would willingly undertake such operations occasionally, but for the fixed notion that every improvement of land should at once pay, whereas the St. George's Company is to be consistently

monastic in its principles of labour, and to work for the redemption of any desert land, without other idea of gain than the certainty of future good to others. I should best like a bit of marsh land of small value, which I would trench into alternate ridge and canal, changing it all into solid land, and deep water, to be farmed in fish. If, instead, I get a rocky piece, I shall first arrange reservoirs for rain, then put what earth is sprinkled on it into workable masses; and ascertaining, in either case, how many mouths the gained spaces of ground will easily feed, put upon them families chosen for me by old landlords, who know their people, and can send me cheerful and honest ones, accustomed to obey orders, and live in the fear of God. Whether the fear be Catholic, or Church-of-England, or Presbyterian, I do not in the least care, so that the family be capable of any kind of sincere devotion; and conscious of the sacredness of order. If any young couples of the higher classes choose to accept such rough life, I would rather have them for tenants than any others.

Tenants, I say, and at long lease, if they behave well: with power eventually to purchase the piece of land they live on for themselves, if they can save the price of it; the rent they pay, meanwhile, being the tithe of the annual produce, to St. George's fund. The modes of the cultivation of the land are to be under the control of the overseer of the whole estate, appointed by the Trustees of the fund; but the tenants shall build their own houses to their own minds, under certain conditions as to material and strength; and have for themselves the entire produce of the land, except the tithe aforesaid.

The children will be required to attend training schools for bodily exercise, and music, with such other education as I have already described. Every household will have its library, given it from the fund, and consisting of a fixed number of volumes,—some constant, the others chosen by each family out of a list of permitted books, from which they afterwards may increase their library if they choose. The formation of this library for choice, by a republication of

classical authors in standard forms, has long been a main object with me. No newspapers, nor any books but those named in the annually renewed lists, are to be allowed in any household. In time I hope to get a journal published, containing notice of any really important matters taking place in this or other countries, in the closely sifted truth of them.

The first essential point in the education given to the children will be the habit of instant, finely accurate, and totally unreasoning, obedience to their fathers, mothers, and tutors; the same precise and unquestioning submission being required from heads of families to the officers set over them. The second essential will be the understanding of the nature of honour, making the obedience solemn and constant; so that the slightest wilful violation of the laws of the society may be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and no less disgraceful than a soldier's recoiling from his place in a battle.

In our present state of utter moral disorganization, it might indeed seem as if it would be impossible either to secure obedience, or explain the sensation of honour; but the instincts of both are native in man, and the roots of them cannot wither, even under the dust-heap of modern liberal opinions. My settlers, you observe, are to be young people, bred on old estates; my commandants will be veteran soldiers; and it will be soon perceived that pride based on servitude to the will of another is far loftier and happier than pride based on servitude to humour of one's own.

Each family will at first be put on its trial for a year, without any lease of the land: if they behave well, they shall have a lease for three years; if through that time they satisfy their officers, a life-long lease, with power to purchase.

I have already stated that no machines moved by artificial power are to be used on the estates of the society; wind, water, and animal force are to be the only motive powers employed, and there is to be as little trade or importation as possible; the utmost simplicity of life, and restriction of possession, being combined with the highest attainable refinement of temper and thought. Everything that the members of any house-

hold can sufficiently make for themselves, they are so to make, however clumsily; but the carpenter and smith, trained to perfectest work in wood and iron, are to be employed on the parts of houses and implements in which finish is essential to strength. The ploughshare and spade must be made by the smith, and the roof and floors by a carpenter; but the boys of the house must be able to make either a horsehoe, or a table.

Simplicity of life without coarseness, and delight in life without lasciviousness, are, under such conditions, not only possible to human creatures, but natural to them. I do not pretend to tell you straight-forwardly all laws of nature respecting the conduct of men; but some of those laws I know, and will endeavour to get obeyed; others, as they are needful, will be in the sequel of such obedience ascertained. What final relations may take place between masters and servants, labourers and employers, old people and young, useful people and useless, in such a society, only experience can conclude; nor is there any reason to anticipate the conclusion. Some few things the most obstinate will admit, and the least credulous believe: that washed faces are healthier than dirty ones, whole clothes decenter than ragged ones, kind behaviour more serviceable than malicious, and pure air pleasanter than foul. Upon that much of "philosophic positive" I mean to act; and, little by little, to define in these letters the processes of action. That it should be left to me to begin such a work, with only one man in England—Thomas Carlyle—to whom I can look for steady guidance, is alike wonderful and sorrowful to me; but as the thing is so, I can only do what seems to me necessary, none else coming forward to do it. For my own part, I entirely hate the whole business: I dislike having either power or responsibility; am ashamed to ask for money, and plagued in spending it. I don't want to talk, nor to write, nor to advise or direct anybody. I am far more provoked at being thought foolish by foolish people, than pleased at being thought sensible by sensible people; and the average proportion of the numbers of each is not to my advantage. If I could find any one able

to carry on the plan instead of me, I never should trouble myself about it more; and even now, it is only with extreme effort and chastisement of my indolence that I go on: but, unless I am struck with palsy, I do not seriously doubt my perseverance, until I find somebody able to take up the matter in the same mind, and with a better heart.

The laws required to be obeyed by the families living on the land will be,—with some relaxation and modification, so as to fit them for English people,—those of Florence in the fourteenth century. In what additional rules may be adopted, I shall follow, for the most part, Bacon, or Sir Thomas More, under sanction always of the higher authority which of late the English nation has wholly set its strength to defy—that of the Founder of its Religion.

Fors Clavigera, II, Letter XXXVII.

MEMORANDUM AND STATUTES OF THE COMPANY OF ST. GEORGE

(June 15, 1875)

THE Company is constituted with the object of determining and instituting in practice the wholesome laws of agricultural life and economy and of instructing the agricultural labourer in the science, art and literature of good husbandry.

With this object it is proposed to acquire, by gift, purchase or otherwise plots or tracts of land in different parts of the country which will be brought into such state of cultivation or left uncultivated or turned into waste or common land and applied to such purposes as, having regard to the nature of the soil and other surrounding circumstances, may in each case be thought to be most generally useful.

The members of the Company shall be styled Companions of the Company of St. George. . . . The name of every Companion shall be entered on the Roll of Companions either by himself in the presence of two witnesses of full age who

shall attest such entry, or, if the Companion shall so desire, by the Master of the Company with the same formalities. The Roll of Companions shall be kept in safe custody within the walls of the College of Corpus Christi in Oxford, or at such other safe and commodious place as the Companions shall from time to time direct.

Each Companion shall by virtue of the entry of his name on the Roll be deemed to have bound himself by a solemn vow and promise, as strict as if the same had been ratified by oath, to be true and loyal to the Company and to the best of his power and might, so far as in him lies, to forward and advance the objects and interests thereof and faithfully to keep and obey the statutes and rules thereof, yet so nevertheless that he shall not be bound in any way to harass, annoy, injure or inconvenience his neighbour.

Chief among the Companions of the Company shall be the Master thereof, who, so long as he shall hold office, shall have full and absolute power at his will and pleasure to make and repeal laws and by-laws, and in all respects to rule, regulate, manage and direct the affairs of the Company and receive, apply and administer funds and subscriptions in aid of its objects, and to purchase, acquire, cultivate, manage, lease, sell or otherwise dispose of the estates and properties of the Company and generally direct and control the operations thereof.

The Master shall be elected and may from time to time and at any time be deposed by the votes of a majority in number of the Companions in General Meeting assembled, but except in the event of his resignation or deposition shall hold office for life. The first Master of the Company shall be John Ruskin, who shall however (subject to re-election) only hold office until the first General Meeting of the Companions.

The Master shall render to each Companion, and shall be at liberty to print, if he thinks fit, for public circulation, a monthly report and account of the operations and financial position of the Company.

No Master or other Companion of the Company shall either

directly or indirectly receive any pay, profit, emolument or advantage whatsoever from, out of, by, or by means of his office or position as a member of the Company.

The practical supervision and management of the estates and properties of the Company shall, subject to the direction and control of the Master, be entrusted to and carried out by land agents, tenants and labourers, who shall be styled Retainers of the Company.

The name of each Retainer in the permanent employ of the Company shall be entered in a Register, to be called the Roll of Retainers and to be kept at the same place as the Roll of Companions. Such entry shall be made either by the Retainer himself in the presence of one witness of full age who shall attest the entry, or, if the Retainer shall so desire, by the Master with the same formalities.

No pecuniary liability shall attach to any Retainer of the Company, by virtue of his position as such, but each Retainer shall, by virtue of the entry of his name on the Roll be deemed to have bound himself by a solemn vow and promise, as strict as if the same had been ratified by oath, to be true and loyal to the Company and faithfully to keep and obey the statutes and rules thereof and the orders and commands of the officers of the Company who, from time to time, may be set over him.

Each land agent and labourer being a Retainer of the Company shall receive and be paid a fixed salary, in return for his services, and shall not by perquisites, commissions, or any other means whatever either directly or indirectly receive or acquire any pay, profit, emolument or advantages whatever, other than such fixed salary from, out of, or by means of his office or position as a Retainer of the Company.

The rents and profits to be derived from the estates and properties of the Company shall be applied, in the first instance, in the development of the land and the physical, intellectual, moral, social and religious improvement of the residents thereon, in such manner as the Master shall from time to time direct or approve, and the surplus rents and

profits, if any, shall be applied in reduction of the amount paid by the tenants, in proportion to their respective skill and industry, either by a gradual remission of rent towards the close of the tenancy or in such other way as may be thought best, but in no case shall the Companions personally derive any rents or profits from the property of the Company.

All land and hereditaments for the time being belonging to the Company shall be conveyed to and vested in any two or more of the Companions, whom the Master may from time to time select for the office, as Trustees of the Company, and shall be dealt with by them according to the directions of the Master.

The property of the Company shall belong to the Companions, in the shares and proportions in which they shall have respectively contributed or by succession or accruer become entitled to the same.

Each Companion shall be entitled, by writing under his hand during his lifetime, or by will or codicil, to appoint one person as his successor in the Company, and such person shall, on entry of his name on the Roll of Companions, in compliance with the formalities hereinbefore described, become a Companion of the Company and become entitled to the share of his appointer in the property of the Company.

Each Companion shall at any time be entitled to resign his position, by giving to the Master a Notice, under his hand, of his desire and intention to do so.

If any Companion shall resign his position, or die without having appointed a successor, or if the person so appointed shall . . . fail to have his name entered on the Roll of Companions, in compliance with the formalities hereinbefore prescribed, his share in the property of the Company shall forthwith become forfeited and shall accrue to the other Companions, in the shares and proportions in which they shall *inter se* be for the time being entitled to the property of the Company.

The Company may at any time be dissolved by the Votes of three-fourths of the Companions in General Meeting as-

sembled, and in the event of the Company being so dissolved, or being dissolved by any other means not hereinbefore specially provided for, the property of the Company shall, subject to the debts, liabilities and engagements thereof, become divisible among the Companions for the time being, in the shares and proportions in which they shall, for the time being, be entitled thereto, yet so nevertheless, that all leases, agreements for leases, and other tenancies for the time being subsisting on the property of the Company shall bind the persons among whom the property comprised therein shall so become divisible and shall continue as valid and effectual to all intents and purposes as if the Company had not been dissolved.

F. C., II, Letter LV.

Editorial Note: With a few conscientious emendations supplied by Ruskin, this document—drawn up, of course, by his attorneys in the legal verbiage to which he fiercely objected—became the foundation parchment of St. George.

MUSTERING THE COMPANIONS

Of course, the first natural idea taken up by persons who merely hear talk, or read newspapers, about the Company, is that their domain is intended for a *refuge* for the persons who join it—that within its walls the poor are at once to be made rich, and the sorrowful happy.

Alas, this is not by any means the notion of the St. George's Company. It is to be a band of delivering Knights—not of churls needing deliverance; of eager givers and servants—not of eager beggars and persons needing service. It is only the Rich and the Strong, whom I receive for Companions—those who come not to be ministered unto, but to minister. Rich, yet some of them in other kind of riches than the world's; strong, yet some in other than the world's strength. But this

much at least of literal wealth and strength they *must* have —the power, and formed habit, of self-support. I accept no Companion by whom I am not convinced that the Society will be aided rather than burdened; and although I value intelligence, resolution, and personal strength, more than any other riches, I hope to find, in a little while, that there are people in the world who can hold money without being blinded, by their possession of it, to justice or duty.

The Companions whom I accept will be divided, according to their means and circumstances, into three classes.

The first and highest class will be called "Comites Ministrantes," "Companions Servant." It will be composed of the few who devote their main energy to the work of the Company; and who, as I do myself, and as the Master must always, pursue their private avocations only in subjection to its interests, being at the same time in positions absolutely independent, and openly shown to be so.

The second, or middle class, will be called "Comites Militantes," "Companions Militant."

These will be persons occupied actually in manual labour on the ground, or in any work which the Master may order, for the fulfilment of the Society's functions; being dependent on such labour for their maintenance, under the conditions fixed by the Company's statutes.

The third and lowest order will be called "Comites Consilii" (Friends of, or in, Council,) "Companions Consular," who will form the general body of the Society, being occupied in their own affairs as earnestly as before they joined it; but giving it the tenth of their income; and in all points, involving its principles, obeying the orders of the Master. Thus almost any tradesman may continue his trade, being a Companion; but, if a jeweller, he must not sell false jewels; or if a butcher (I have one accepted already, and I very much want to get a butcher's daughter, if I could; but she won't come,) must not sell bad meat.

I at first meant them to be called Censors, or Companions Estimant, because when the Society comes into real work, the

sentences of fine, or other disgrace, pronounced by the marshals' officers, and the general modes of determining quality and value of goods, must be always ratified by majority of this order of the Companions, in whom also, by virtue of their number, the election, and therefore censorship, of the Master, will necessarily be vested.

F. C., III, Letter LXIII.

DECREE OF NON-INTERCOURSE WITH ROGUES

Now I call on the St. George's Company, first, to separate themselves clearly, as a body, from persons who practise recognized, visible, unquestionable iniquity. They are to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of Darkness; but to walk as Children of Light.

Literally, observe. Those phrases of the Bible are entirely evaded, because we never apply them to immediate practice.

St. George's Companions are to have *no fellowship* with works of darkness; no companionship whatsoever with recognizable mischief, or mischievous men. Of every person of your acquaintance, you are solemnly to ask yourselves, *Is* this man a swindler, a liar, a gambler, an adulterer, a selfish oppressor, and taskmaster?

Don't suppose you can't tell. You can tell with perfect ease; or, if you meet any mysterious personage of whom it proves difficult to ascertain whether he be rogue or not, keep clear of him till you know. With those whom you *know* to be honest, *know* to be striving, with main purpose, to serve mankind and honour their God, you are humbly and lovingly to associate yourselves: and with none others.

"You do not like to set yourself up for being better than other people? You dare not judge harshly of your fellow-creatures?"

I do not tell you to judge them. I only tell you not to dine with them, and not to deal with them. That they lose the pleasure of your company, or the profit on your custom,

is no crushing punishment. To their own Master they stand or fall; but to *your* Master, Christ, *you* must stand, with your best might; and in this manner only, self-asserting as you may think it, can you confess Him before men. . . .

And observe, it is in charity for them (the rogues), much more than by duty to others, that you are required to do this. For half, at least, of these Caiaphas' servants sin through pure ignorance, confirmed by custom. The essential difference in business, for instance, between a man of honour and a rogue, is that the first tries to give as *much* to his customer for his money as he can, and the second to give as *little;* but how many are at present engaged in business who are trying to sell their goods at as high a price as possible, supposing that effort to be the very soul and vital principle of business! Now by simply asserting to these ignorant persons that they *are* rogues, whether they know it or not; and that, in the present era of general enlightenment, gentlemen and ladies must not only learn to spell and to dance, but also to know the difference between cheating their neighbours and serving them.

F. C., III, Letter LXIII.

ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

ESSAYS ON POLITICAL ECONOMY

I

MAINTENANCE OF LIFE: WEALTH, MONEY AND RICHES

As domestic economy regulates the acts and habits of a household, political economy regulates those of a society or state, with reference to the means of its maintenance.

Political economy is neither an art nor a science,[1] but a system of conduct and legislature, founded on the sciences, directing the arts, and impossible, except under certain conditions of moral culture.

By the "maintenance" of a state is to be understood the support of its population in healthy and happy life; and the increase of their numbers, so far as that increase is consistent with their happiness. It is not the object of political economy to increase the numbers of a nation at the cost of common health or comfort; nor to increase indefinitely the comfort of individuals, by sacrifice of surrounding lives, or possibilities of life.

The assumption which lies at the root of nearly all erroneous reasoning on political economy,—namely, that its

[1] The science which in modern days has been called Political Economy is in reality nothing more than the investigation of the phenomena of commercial operations. It has no connexion with political economy, as understood and treated of by the great thinkers of past ages; and as long as it is allowed to pass under the same name every word written by those thinkers—and chiefly the words of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, and Bacon—must be either misunderstood or misapplied. The reader must not, therefore, be surprised at the care and insistence with which I have retained the literal and earliest sense of all important terms used in these papers; for a word is usually well made at the time it is first wanted; its youngest meaning has in it the full strength of its youth; subsequent senses are commonly warped or weakened; and as a misused word always is liable to involve an obscured thought, and all careful thinkers, either on this or any other subject, are sure to have used their words accurately, the first condition, in order to be able to avail ourselves of their sayings at all, is a firm definition of terms.

object is to accumulate money or exchangeable property,—may be shown in few words to be without foundation. For no economist would admit national economy to be legitimate which proposed to itself only the building of a pyramid of gold. He would declare the gold to be wasted, were it to remain in the monumental form, and would say it ought to be employed. But to what end? Either it must be used only to gain more gold, and build a larger pyramid, or to some purpose other than the gaining of gold. And this other purpose, however at first apprehended, will be found to resolve itself finally into the service of man—that is to say, the extension, defence, or comfort of his life. The golden pyramid may perhaps be providently built, perhaps improvidently; but, at all events, the wisdom or folly of the accumulation can only be determined by our having first clearly stated the aim of all economy, namely, the extension of life.

If the accumulation of money, or of exchangeable property, were a certain means of extending existence, it would be useless, in discussing economical questions, to fix our attention upon the more distant object—life—instead of the immediate one—money. But it is not so. Money may sometimes be accumulated at the cost of life, or by limitations of it; that is to say, either by hastening the deaths of men, or preventing their births. It is therefore necessary to keep clearly in view the ultimate object of economy; and to determine the expediency of minor operations with reference to that ulterior end.

It has been just stated that the object of political economy is the continuance not only of life, but of healthy and happy life. But all true happiness is both a consequence and cause of life: it is a sign of its vigour, and means of its continuance. All true suffering is in like manner a consequence and cause of death. I shall therefore in future, use the word "Life" singly: but let it be understood to include in its signification the happiness and power of the entire human nature, body and soul.

That human nature, as its Creator made it, and maintains it wherever His laws are observed, is entirely harmonious. No physical error can be more profound, no moral error more dangerous, than that involved in the monkish doctrine of the opposition of body to soul. No soul can be perfect in an imperfect body; no body perfect without perfect soul. Every right action and true thought sets the seal of its beauty on person and face; every wrong action and foul thought its seal of distortion; and the various aspects of humanity might be read as plainly as a printed history, were it not that the impressions are so complex that it must always in some cases—and, in the present state of our knowledge, in all cases—be impossible to decipher them completely. Nevertheless, the face of a consistently just, and of a consistently unjust person, may always be rightly discerned at a glance; and if the qualities are continued by descent through a generation or two, there arises a complete distinction of race. Both moral and physical qualities are communicated by descent, far more than they can be developed by education (though both may be destroyed for want of education), and there is as yet no ascertained limit to the nobleness of person and mind which the human creature may attain, by persevering observance of the laws of God respecting its birth and training.

We must therefore yet farther define the aim of political economy to be "The multiplication of human life at the highest standard." It might at first seem questionable whether we should endeavour to maintain a small number of persons of the highest type of beauty and intelligence, or a larger number of an inferior class. But I shall be able to show in the sequel, that the way to maintain the largest number is first to aim at the highest standard. Determine the noblest type of man, and aim simply at maintaining the largest possible number of persons of that class, and it will be found that the largest possible number of every healthy subordinate class must necessarily be produced also.

The perfect type of manhood, as just stated, involves the perfections (whatever we may hereafter determine these to

be) of his body, affections, and intelligence. The material things, therefore, which it is the object of political economy to produce, and use (or accumulate for use), are things which serve either to sustain and comfort the body, or exercise rightly the affections and form the intelligence.[1] Whatever truly serves either of these purposes is "useful" to man, wholesome, healthful, helpful, or holy. By seeking such things, man prolongs and increases his life upon the earth.

On the other hand, whatever does not serve either of these purposes,—much more whatever counteracts them,—is in like manner useless to man, unwholesome, unhelpful, or unholy; and by seeking such things man shortens and diminishes his life upon the earth. And neither with respect to things useful or useless can man's esimate of them alter their nature. Certain substances being good for his food, and others noxious to him, what he thinks or wishes respecting them can neither change their nature, nor prevent their power. If he eats corn, he will live; if nightshade, he will die. If he produce or make good and beautiful things, they will "re-create" him; (note the solemnity and weight of the word); if bad and ugly things, they will "corrupt" or break in pieces—that is, in the

[1] It may be observed, in anticipation of some of our future results, that while some conditions of the affections are aimed at by the economist as final, others are necessary to him as his own instruments: as he obtains them in greater or less degree his own farther work becomes more or less possible. Such, for instance, are the fortifying virtues, which the wisest men of all times have, with more or less of distinctness, arranged under the general heads of Prudence, or Discretion (the spirit which discerns and adopts rightly); Justice (the spirit which rules and divides rightly); Fortitude (the spirit which persists and endures rightly); and Temperance (the spirit which stops and refuses rightly); or in shorter terms still, the virtues which teach how to consist, assist, persist, and desist. These outermost virtues are not only the means of protecting and prolonging life itself, but they are the chief guards or sources of the material means of life, and are the visible governing powers and princes of economy. Thus (reserving detailed statements for the sequel) precisely according to the number of just men in a nation, is their power of avoiding either intestine or foreign war. All disputes may be peaceably settled, if a sufficient number of persons have been trained to submit to the principles of justice. The necessity for war is in direct ratio to the number of unjust persons who are incapable of determining a quarrel but by violence. Whether the injustice take the form of the desire of dominion, or of refusal to submit to it, or to lust of territory, or lust of money, or of mere irregular passion and wanton will, the result is economically the same; —loss of the quantity of power and life consumed in repressing the injustice, as well as of that requiring to be repressed, added to the material and moral destruction caused by the fact of war.

exact degree of their power, kill him. For every hour of labour, however enthusiastic or well intended, which he spends for that which is not bread, so much possibility of life is lost to him. His fancies, likings, beliefs, however brilliant, eager, or obstinate, are of no avail if they are set on a false object. Of all that he has laboured for, the eternal law of heaven and earth measures out to him for reward, to the utmost atom, that part which he ought to have laboured for, and withdraws from him (or enforces on him, it may be) inexorably that part which he ought not to have laboured for. The dust and chaff are all, to the last speck, winnowed away, and on his summer threshing-floor stands his heap of corn; little or much, not according to his labour, but to his discretion. No "commercial arrangements," no painting of surfaces nor alloying of substances, will avail him a penny-weight. Nature asks of him calmly and inevitably, What have you found, or formed—the right thing or the wrong? By the right thing you shall live; by the wrong you shall die.

To thoughtless persons it seems otherwise. The world looks to them as if they could cozen it out of some ways and means of life. But they cannot cozen IT: they can only cozen their neighbours. The world is not to be cheated of a grain; not so much as a breath of its air can be drawn surreptitiously. For every piece of wise work done, so much life is granted; for every piece of foolish work, nothing; for every piece of wicked work, so much death. This is as sure as the courses of day and night. But when the means of life are once produced, men, by their various struggles and industries of accumulation or exchange, may variously gather, waste, restrain, or distribute them; necessitating, in proportion to the waste or restraint, accurately so much more death. The rate and range of additional death is measured by the rate and range of waste, and is inevitable;—the only question (determined mostly by fraud in peace, and force in war) is, Who is to die, and how?

Such being the everlasting law of human existence, the essential work of the political economist is to determine what

are in reality useful or life-giving things, and by what degrees and kinds of labour they are attainable and distributable. This investigation divides itself under three great heads;—the studies, namely, of the phenomena, first, of WEALTH; secondly, of MONEY; and thirdly, of RICHES.

These terms are often used as synonymous, but they signify entirely different things. "WEALTH" consists of things in themselves valuable; "MONEY," of documentary claims to the possession of such things; and "RICHES" is a relative term, expressing the magnitude of the possessions of one person or society as compared with those of other persons or societies.

The study of Wealth is a province of natural science:—it deals with the essential properties of things.

The study of Money is a province of commercial science:—it deals with conditions of engagement and exchange.

The study of Riches is a province of moral science:—it deals with the due relations of men to each other in regard of material possessions; and with the just laws of their association for purposes of labour.

I shall in this paper shortly sketch out the range of subjects which will come before us as we follow these three branches of inquiry.

SECTION I.—WEALTH

Wealth, it has been said, consists of things essentially valuable. We now, therefore, need a definition of "value."

Value signifies the strength or "availing" of anything towards the sustaining of life, and is always two-fold; that is to say, primarily, INTRINSIC, and secondarily, EFFECTUAL.

The reader must, by anticipation, be warned against confusing value with cost, or with price. Value is the life-giving power of anything; cost, the quantity of labour required to produce it; price, the quantity of labour which its possessor will take in exchange for it. Cost and price are commercial conditions, to be studied under the head of money.

Intrinsic value is the absolute power of anything to support

life. A sheaf of wheat of given quality and weight has in it a measurable power of sustaining the substance of the body; a cubic foot of pure air, a fixed power of sustaining its warmth; and a cluster of flowers of given beauty a fixed power of enlivening or animating the senses and heart.

It does not in the least affect the intrinsic value of the wheat, the air, or the flowers, that men refuse or despise them. Used or not, their own power is in them, and that particular power is in nothing else.

But, in order that this value of theirs may become effectual, a certain state is necessary in the recipient of it. The digesting, breathing, and perceiving functions must be perfect in the human creature before the food, air, or flowers can become of their full value to it. The production of effectual value, therefore, always involves two needs: first, the production of a thing essentially useful; then the production of the capacity to use it. Where the intrinsic value and acceptant capacity come together there is Effectual value, or wealth; where there is either no intrinsic value, or no acceptant capacity, there is no effectual value; that is to say, no wealth. A horse is no wealth to us if we cannot ride, nor a picture if we cannot see, nor can any noble thing be wealth, except to a noble person. As the aptness of the user increases, the effectual value of the thing used increases; and in its entirety can co-exist only with perfect skill of use, or harmony of nature. The effectual value of a given quantity of any commodity existing in the world at any moment is therefore a mathematical function of the capacity existing in the human race to enjoy it. Let its intrinsic value be represented by x, and the recipient faculty by y; its effectual value is $x\ y$, in which the sum varies as either coefficient varies, is increased by either's increase,[1] and cancelled by either's absence.

Valuable material things may be conveniently referred to five heads:

[1] With this somewhat strange and ungeometrical limitation, however, which, here expressed for the moment in the briefest terms, we must afterwards trace in detail,—that $x\ y$ may be indefinitely increased by the increase of y only; but not by the increase of x, unless y increase also in a fixed proportion.

1. Land, with its associated air, water, and organisms.

2. Houses, furniture, and instruments.

3. Stored or prepared food and medicine, and articles of bodily luxury, including clothing.

4. Books.

5. Works of art.

We shall enter into separate inquiry as to the conditions of value under each of these heads. The following sketch of the entire subject may be useful for future reference.

1. Land. Its value is twofold.

A. As producing food and mechanical power.

B. As an object of sight and thought, producing intellectual power.

A. Its value, as a means of producing food and mechanical power, varies with its form (as mountain or plain), with its substance (in soil or mineral contests), and with its climate. All these conditions of intrinsic value, in order to give effectual value, must be known and complied with by the men who have to deal with it; but at any given time and place, the intrinsic value is fixed: such and such a piece of land, with its associated lakes and seas, rightly treated in surface and substance, can produce precisely so much food and power, and no more.

Its surface treatment (agriculture) and substance treatment (practical geology and chemistry) are the first roots of economical science. By surface treatment, however, I mean more than agriculture as commonly understood; I mean land and sea culture;—dominion over both the fixed and the flowing fields;—perfect acquaintance with the laws of climate, and of vegetable and animal growth in the given tracts of earth or ocean, and of their relations to those of other districts; such relations regulating especially the production of those articles of food which, being in each particular spot producible in the highest perfection, will bring the best price in commercial exchanges.

B. The second element of value in land is its beauty, united with such conditions of space and form as are necessary for

exercise, or pleasant to the eye, associated with vital organism.

Land of the highest value in these respects is that lying in temperate climates, and boldly varied in form; removed from unhealthy or dangerous influences (as of miasm or volcano); and capable of sustaining a rich fauna and flora. Such land, carefully tended by the hand of man, so far as to remove from it unsightlinesses and evidences of decay; guarded from violence, and inhabited, under man's affectionate protection, by every kind of living creature that can occupy it in peace, forms the most precious "property" that human beings can possess.

The determination of the degree in which these two elements of value can be united in land, or in which either element must, or should, in particular cases, be sacrificed to the other, forms the most important branch of economical inquiry respecting preferences of things.

2. Buildings, furniture, and instruments.

The value of buildings consists, A. In permanent strength, with convenience of form, of size, and of position; so as to render employment peaceful, social intercourse easy, temperature and air healthy. The advisable or possible magnitude of cities and mode of their distribution in squares, streets, courts, &c.; the relative value of sites of land, and the modes of structure which are healthiest and most permanent, have to be studied under this head.

B. The value of buildings consists secondarily in historical association and architectural beauty, of which we have to examine their influence on manners and life.

The value of instruments consists, A. In their power of shortening labour, or otherwise accomplishing (as ships) what human strength unaided could not. The kinds of work which are severally best accomplished by hand or by machine;—the effect of machinery in gathering and multiplying population, and its influence on the minds and bodies of such population; together with the conceivable uses of machinery on a colossal scale in accomplishing mighty and useful works, hitherto unthought of, such as the deepening of large river channels;—

changing the surface of mountainous districts;—irrigating tracts of desert in the torrid zone;—breaking up, and thus rendering capable of quicker fusion edges of ice in the northern and southern Arctic seas, &c., so rendering parts of the earth habitable which hitherto have not been so, are to be studied under this head.

B. The value of instruments is, secondarily, in their aid to abstract sciences. The degree in which the multiplication of such instruments should be encouraged, so as to make them, if large, easy of access to numbers (as costly telescopes), or so cheap as that they might, in a serviceable form, become a common part of the furniture of households, is to be considered under this head.

3. Food, medicine, and articles of luxury. Under this head we shall have to examine the possible methods of obtaining pure and nourishing food in such security and equality of supply as to avoid both waste and famine: then the economy of medicine and just range of sanitary law: finally the economy of luxury, partly an æsthetic and partly an ethical question.

4. Books. The value of these consists,

A. In their power of preserving and communicating the knowledge of facts.

B. In their power of exciting vital or noble emotion and intellectual action. They have also their corresponding negative powers of disguising and effacing the memory of facts, and killing the noble emotions, or exciting base ones. Under these two heads we have to consider the economical and educational value, positive and negative, of literature;—the means of producing and educating good authors, and the means and advisability of rendering good books generally accessible, and directing the reader's choice to them.

5. Works of art. The value of these is of the same nature as that of books, but the laws of their production and possible modes of distribution are very different, and require separate examination.

SECTION 2.—MONEY

Under this head, we shall have to examine the laws of currency and exchange; of which I will note here the first principles.

Money has been inaccurately spoken of as merely a means of circulation. It is, on the contrary, an expression of right. It is not wealth, but a documentary claim to wealth, being the sign[1] of the relative quantities of it, or of the labour producing it, to which, at a given time, persons or societies are entitled.

If all the money in the world, notes and gold, were destroyed in an instant, it would leave the world neither richer nor poorer than it was. But it would leave the individual inhabitants of it in different relations.

Money is, therefore, correspondent in its nature to the title-deed of an estate. Though the deed be burned, the estate still exists, but the right to it has become disputable.

The worth of money remains unchanged, as long as the proportion of the quantity of existing money to the quantity of existing wealth or available labour which it professes to represent, remains unchanged.

If the wealth increases, but not the money, the worth of the money increases; if the money increases, but not the wealth, the worth of the money diminishes.

Money, therefore, cannot be arbitrarily multiplied, any more than title-deeds can. So long as the existing wealth or available labour is not fully represented by the currency, the currency may be increased without diminution of the assigned worth of its pieces. But when the existing wealth, or available labour is once fully represented, every piece of money thrown into circulation diminishes the worth of every other existing piece, in the proportion it bears to the number of them, provided the new piece be received with equal credit;

[1] Always, and necessarily, an imperfect sign; but capable of approximate accuracy if rightly ordered.

if not, the depreciation of worth takes place exclusively in the new piece, according to the inferiority of its credit.

When, however, new money, composed of some substance of supposed intrinsic value (as of gold), is brought into the market, or when new notes are issued which are supposed to be deserving of credit, the desire to obtain the money will, under certain circumstances, stimulate industry: an additional quantity of wealth is immediately produced, and if this be in proportion to the new claims advanced, the value of the existing currency is undepreciated. If the stimulus given be so great as to produce more goods than are proportioned to the additional coinage, the worth of the existing currency will be raised.

Arbitrary control and issues of currency affect the production of wealth, by acting on the hopes and fears of men, and are, under certain circumstances, wise. But the issue of additional currency to meet the exigencies of immediate expense, is merely one of the disguised forms of borrowing or taxing. It is, however, in the present low state of economical knowledge, often possible for Governments to venture on an issue of currency, when they could not venture on an additional loan or tax, because the real operation of such issue is not understood by the people, and the pressure of it is irregularly distributed, and with an unperceived gradation.

Finally. The use of substances of intrinsic value as the materials of a currency, is a barbarism;—a remnant of the conditions of barter, which alone can render commerce possible among savage nations. It is, however, still necessary, partly as a mechanical check on arbitrary issues; partly as a means of exchanges with foreign nations. In proportion to the extension of civilization, and increase of trustworthiness in Governments, it will cease. So long as it exists, the phenomena of the cost and price of the articles used for currency, are mingled with those of currency itself, in an almost inextricable manner; and the worth of money in the market is affected by multitudinous accidental circumstances, which have been traced, with more or less success by writers on com-

mercial operations: but with these variations the true political economist has no more to do than an engineer fortifying a harbour of refuge against Atlantic tide, has to concern himself with the cries or quarrels of children who dig pools with their fingers for its ebbing currents among the sand.

SECTION 3.—RICHES

According to the various industry, capacity, good fortune, and desires of men, they obtain greater or smaller share of, and claim upon, the wealth of the world.

The inequalities between these shares, always in some degree just and necessary, may be either restrained by law (or circumstance) within certain limits; or may increase indefinitely.

Where no moral or legal restraint is put upon the exercise of the will and intellect of the stronger, shrewder, or more covetous men, these differences become ultimately enormous. But as soon as they become so distinct in their extremes as that, on one side, there shall be manifest redundance of possession, and on the other manifest pressure of need,—the terms "riches" and "poverty" are used to express the opposite states; being contrary only in the manner of the terms "warmth" and "cold;" which neither of them imply an actual degree, but only a relation to other degrees, of temperature.

Respecting riches, the economist has to inquire, first, into the advisable modes of their collection; secondly, into the advisable modes of their administration.

Respecting the collection of national riches, he has to inquire, first, whether he is justified in calling the nation rich, if the quantity of money it possesses relatively to that possessed by other nations be large, irrespectively of the manner of its distribution. Or does the mode of distribution in any wise affect the nature of the riches? Thus, if the king alone be rich—suppose Crœsus or Mausolus—are the Lydians and Carians therefore a rich nation? Or if one or two slave-masters be rich, and the nation be otherwise composed of slaves, is it to be called a rich nation? For if not, and the

ideas of a certain mode of distribution or operation in the riches, and of a certain degree of freedom in the people, enter into our idea of riches as attributed to a people, we shall have to define the degree of fluency or circulative character which is essential to their vitality; and the degree of independence of action required in their possessors. Questions which look as if they would take time in answering. And farther. Since there are two modes in which the inequality, which is indeed the condition and constituent of riches, may be established—namely, by increase of possession on the one side, and by decrease of it on the other—we have to inquire, with respect to any given state of riches, precisely in what manner the correlative poverty was produced: that is to say, whether by being surpassed only, or being depressed also; and if by being depressed, what are the advantages, or the contrary, conceivable in the depression. For instance, it being one of the commonest advantages of being rich to entertain a number of servants, we have to inquire, on the one side, what economical process produced the riches of the master; and on the other, what economical process produced the poverty of the persons who serve him; and what advantages each (on his own side) derives from the result.

These being the main questions touching the collection of riches, the next, or last, part of the inquiry is into their administration.

They have in the main three great economical powers which require separate examination: namely, the powers of selection, direction, and provision.

A. Their power of SELECTION relates to things of which the supply is limited (as the supply of best things is always). When it becomes matter of question to whom such things are to belong, the richest person has necessarily the first choice, unless some arbitrary mode of distribution be otherwise determined upon. The business of the economist is to show how this choice may be a wise one.

B. Their power of DIRECTION arises out of the necessary relation of rich men to poor, which ultimately, in one way or

another, involves the direction of, or authority over, the labour of the poor; and this nearly as much over their mental as their bodily labour. The business of the economist is to show how this direction may be a Just one.

C. Their power of PROVISION or "preparatory sight" (for pro-accumulation is by no means necessarily provision), is dependent upon their redundance, which may of course by active persons be made available in preparation for future work or future profit; in which function riches have generally received the name of capital; that is to say, of head-, or source-material. The business of the economist is to show how this provision may be a Distant one.

The examination of these three functions of riches will embrace every final problem of political economy;—and, above, or before all, this curious and vital problem,—whether, since the wholesome action of riches in these three functions will depend (it appears), on the Wisdom, Justice, and Farsightedness of the holders; and it is by no means to be assumed that persons primarily rich, must therefore be just and wise,—it may not be ultimately possible so, or somewhat so, to arrange matters, as that persons primarily just and wise, should therefore be rich?

Such being the general plan of the inquiry before us, I shall not limit myself to any consecutive following of it, having hardly any good hope of being able to complete so laborious a work as it must prove to me; but from time to time, as I have leisure, shall endeavour to carry forward this part or that, as may be immediately possible; indicating always with accuracy the place which the particular essay will or should take in the completed system.

II

NATURE OF WEALTH AND LABOUR: STORE-KEEPING AND CURRENCY

THE last paper having consisted of little more than definition of terms, I purpose, in this, to expand and illustrate the given

definitions, so as to avoid confusion in their use when we enter into the detail of our subject.

The view which has been taken of the nature of wealth, namely, that it consists in an intrinsic value developed by a vital power, is directly opposed to two nearly universal conceptions of wealth. In the assertion that value is primarily intrinsic, it opposes the idea that anything which is an object of desire to numbers, and is limited in quantity, may be called, or virtually become, wealth. And in the assertion that value is secondarily dependent upon power in the possessor, it opposes the idea that wealth consists of things exchangeable at rated prices. Before going farther, we will make these two positions clearer.

I. First. All wealth is intrinsic, and is not constituted by the judgment of men. This is easily seen in the case of things affecting the body; we know, that no force of fantasy will make stones nourishing, or poison innocent; but it is less apparent in things affecting the mind. We are easily—perhaps willingly—misled by the appearance of beneficial results obtained by industries addressed wholly to the gratification of fanciful desire; and apt to suppose that whatever is widely coveted, dearly bought, and pleasurable in possession, must be included in our definition of wealth. It is the more difficult to quit ourselves of this error because many things which are true wealth in moderate use, yet become false wealth in immoderate; and many things are mixed of good and evil,—as mostly, books, and works of art,—out of which one person will get the good, and another the evil; so that it seems as if there were no fixed good or evil in the things themselves, but only in the view taken, and use made of them.

But that is not so. The evil and good are fixed in essence and in proportion. They are separable by instinct and judgment, but not interchangeable; and in things in which evil depends upon excess, the point of excess, though indefinable, is fixed; and the power of the thing is on the hither side for good, and on the farther side for evil. And in all cases this power is inherent, not dependent on opinion or choice. Our

thoughts of things neither make, nor mar their eternal force; nor—which is the most serious point for future consideration—can they prevent the effect of it upon ourselves.

Therefore, the object of the special analysis of wealth into which we have presently to enter will be not so much to enumerate what is serviceable, as to distinguish what is destructive; and to show that it is inevitably destructive; that to receive pleasure from an evil thing is not to escape from, or alter the evil of it, but to be *altered by* it; that is, to suffer from it to the utmost, having our own nature, in that degree, made evil also. And it will be shown farther, that, through whatever length of time or subtleties of connexion the harm is accomplished, (being also less or more according to the fineness and worth of the humanity on which it is wrought), still, nothing *but* harm *ever* comes of a bad thing.

So that, finally, wealth is not the accidental object of a morbid desire, but the constant object of a legitimate one. By the fury of ignorance, and fitfulness of caprice, large interests may be continually attached to things unserviceable or hurtful; if their nature could be altered by our passions, the science of Political Economy would be but as the weighing of clouds, and the portioning out of shadows. But of ignorance there is no science; and of caprice no law. Their disturbing forces interfere with the operations of economy, but have nothing in common with them; the calm arbiter of national destiny regards only essential power for good in all it accumulates, and alike disdains the wanderings of imagination and the thirsts of disease.

II. Secondly. The assertion that wealth is not *only* intrinsic, but dependent, in order to become effectual, on a given degree of vital power in its possessor, is opposed to another popular view of wealth;—namely, that though it may always be constituted by caprice, it is, when so constituted, a substantial thing, of which given quantities may be counted as existing here, or there, and exchangeable at rated prices.

In this view there are three errors. The first and chief is

the overlooking the fact that all exchangeableness of commodity, or effective demand for it, depends on the sum of capacity for its use existing, here, or elsewhere. The book we cannot read, or picture we take no delight in, may indeed be called part of our wealth, in so far as we have power of exchanging either for something we like better. But our power of effecting such exchange, and yet more, of effecting it to advantage, depends absolutely on the number of accessible persons who can understand the book, or enjoy the painting, and who will dispute the possession of them. Thus the actual worth of either, even to us, depends no less on their essential goodness than on the capacity existing somewhere for the perception of it; and it is vain in any completed system of production to think of obtaining one without the other. So that, though the great political economist knows that coexistence of capacity for use with temporary possession cannot be always secured, the final fact, on which he bases all action and administration, is that, in the whole nation, or group of nations, he has to deal with, for every grain of intrinsic value produced he must with exactest chemistry produce its twin grain of governing capacity, or in the degree of his failure he has no wealth. Nature's challenge to us is in earnest, as the Assyrian's mock; "I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them." Bavieca's paces are brave, if the Cid backs him; but woe to us, if we take the dust of capacity, wearing the armour of it, for capacity itself, for so all procession, however goodly in the show of it, is to the tomb.

The second error in this popular view of wealth is that, in estimating property which we cannot use as wealth, because it is exchangeable, we in reality confuse wealth with money. The land we have no skill to cultivate, the book which is sealed to us, or dress which is superfluous, may indeed be exchangeable, but as such are nothing more than a cumbrous form of bank-note, of doubtful and slow convertibility. As long as we retain possession of them, we merely keep our

bank-notes in the shape of gravel or clay, of book leaves, or of embroidered tissue. Circumstances may perhaps render such forms the safest, or a certain complacency may attach to the exhibition of them;—into both these advantages we shall inquire afterwards; I wish the reader only to observe here, that exchangeable property which we cannot use is, to us personally, merely one of the forms of money, not of wealth.

The third error in the popular view is the confusion of guardianship with possession; the real state of men of property being, too commonly, that of curators, not possessors of wealth. For a man's power over his property is at the widest range of it, fivefold; it is power of Use, Administration, Ostentation, Destruction, or Bequest: and possession is in use only, which for each man is sternly limited; so that such things, and so much of them, are well for him, or Wealth; and more of them, or any other things, are ill for him, or Illth. Plunged to the lips in Orinoco, he shall drink to his thirst measure,—more, at his peril; with a thousand oxen on his lands, he shall eat to his hunger measure,—more, at his peril. He cannot live in two houses at once; a few bales of silk or wool will suffice for the fabric of all the clothes he can ever wear, and a few books will probably hold all the furniture good for his brain. Beyond these, in the best of us but narrow, capacities, we have but the power of administering, or if for harm, *mal*-administering, wealth (that is to say, distributing, lending, or increasing it);—of exhibiting it (as in magnificence of retinue or furniture),—of destroying, or, finally, of bequeathing it. And with multitudes of rich men, administration degenerates into curatorship; they merely hold their property in charge, as Trustees, for the benefit of some person or persons to whom it is to be delivered upon their death; and the position, explained in clear terms would hardly seem a covetable one. What would be the probable decision of a youth on his entrance into life, to whom the career hoped for him was proposed in terms such as these: "You must work unremittingly, and with your utmost intelligence, during all

your available years; you will thus accumulate wealth to a large amount; but you must touch none of it, beyond what is needful for your support. Whatever sums you gain beyond those required for your decent and moderate maintenance shall be properly taken care of, and on your death-bed you shall have the power of determining to whom they shall belong, or to what purposes be applied?"

The labour of life, under such conditions, would probably be neither zealous nor cheerful; yet the only difference between this position and that of the ordinary capitalist is the power which the latter delights in supposing himself to possess, and which is attributed to him by others, of spending his money at any moment. This pleasure, taken in the imagination of power to part with that with which we have no intention of parting, is one of the most curious though commonest forms of the Eidolon, or Phantasm of Wealth. But the political economist has nothing to do with this idealism, and looks only to the practical issue of it,—namely, that the holder of wealth, in such temper, may be regarded simply as a mechanical means of collection; or as a money-chest with a slit in it,[1] set in the public thoroughfare;—chest of which only Death has the key, and probably Chance the distribution of contents. In his function of lender (which, however, is one of administration, not use, as far as he is himself concerned), the capitalist takes, indeed, a more interesting aspect; but even in that function, his relations with the state are apt to degenerate into a mechanism for the convenient contraction of debt;—a function the more mischievous, because a nation invariably appeases its conscience with respect to an unjustifiable expense by meeting it with borrowed funds,—expresses its repentance of a foolish piece of business by letting its tradesmen wait for their money,—and always leaves its

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[1] The orifice being not merely of a receptant, but of a suctional character. Among the types of human virtue and vice presented grotesquely by the lower animals, perhaps none is more curiously definite than that of avarice in the Cephalopod; a creature which has a purse for a body; a hawk's beak for a mouth; suckers for feet and hands; and whose house is its own skeleton.

descendants to pay for the work which will be of the least service to them.[1]

Quit of these three sources of misconception, the reader will have little farther difficulty in apprehending the real nature of Effectual value. He may, however, at first not without surprise, perceive the consequences involved in the acceptance of our definition. For if the actual existence of wealth be dependent on the power of its possessor, it follows that the sum of wealth held by the nation, instead of being constant or calculable, varies hourly, nay, momentarily, with the number and character of its holders; and that in changing hands, it changes in quantity. And farther, since the worth of the currency is proportioned to the sum of material wealth which it represents, if the sum of the wealth changes, the worth of the currency changes. And thus both the sum of the property, and power of the currency, of the state, vary momentarily as the character and number of the holders. And not only so, but a different rate and manner of variation is caused by the character of the holders of different kinds of wealth. The transitions of value caused by the character of the holders of land differ in mode from those caused by character in holders of works of art; and these again from those caused by character in holders of machinery or other working capital. But we cannot examine these special phenomena of any kind of wealth until we have a clear idea of the way in which true currency expresses them; and of the resulting modes in which the cost and price of any article are related to its value. To obtain this we must approach the subject in its first elements.

Let us suppose a national store of wealth, real or imaginary (that is to say, composed of material things either useful, or believed to be so), presided over by a Government,[2] and that

[1] It would be well if a somewhat dogged conviction could be enforced on nations as on individuals, that, with few exceptions, what they cannot at present pay for, they should not at present have.

[2] The reader is to include here in the idea of "Government," any branch of the Executive, or even any body of private persons, entrusted with the practical management of public interests unconnected directly with their own personal ones. In theoretical discussions of legislative interference with

every workman, having produced any article involving labour in its production, and for which he has no immediate use, brings it to add to this store, receiving from the Government, in exchange, an order either for the return of the thing itself, or of its equivalent in other things,[1] such as he may choose out of the store at any time when he needs them. Now, supposing that the labourer speedily uses this general order, or, in common language, "spends the money," he has neither changed the circumstances of the nation nor his own, except

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political economy, it is usually, and of course unnecessarily, assumed that Government must be always of that form and force in which we have been accustomed to see it;—that its abuses can never be less, nor its wisdom greater, nor its powers more numerous. But, practically, the custom in most civilized countries is, for every man to deprecate the interference of Government as long as things tell for his personal advantage, and to call for it when they cease to do so. The request of the Manchester Economists to be supplied with cotton by the Government (the system of supply and demand having, for the time, fallen sorrowfully short of the expectations of scientific persons from it), is an interesting case in point. It were to be wished that less wide and bitter suffering (suffering, too, of the innocent) had been needed to force the nation, or some part of it, to ask itself why a body of men, already confessedly capable of managing matters both military and divine, should not be permitted, or even requested at need to provide in some wise for sustenance as well as for defence, and secure, if it might be (and it might, I think, even the *rather* be), purity of bodily aliment, as well as of religious conviction? Why, having made many roads for the passage of armies, they may not make a few for the conveyance of food; and after organizing, with applause, various schemes of spiritual instruction for the Public, organize, moreover, some methods of bodily nourishment for them? Or is the soul so much less trustworthy in its instincts than the stomach, that legislation is necessary for the one, but inconvenient to the other?

There is a strange fallacy running at this time through all talk about free-trade. It is continually assumed that every kind of Government interference takes away liberty of trade. Whereas liberty is lost only when interference hinders, not when it helps. You do not take away a man's freedom by showing him his road—nor by making it smoother for him (not that it is always desirable to do so, but it may be); nor even by fencing it for him, if there is an open ditch at the side of it. The real mode in which protection interferes with liberty, and the real evil of it, is not in its "protecting" one person, but in its hindering another; a form of interference which invariably does most mischief to the person it is intended to serve, which the Northern Americans are about discomfortably to discover, unless they think better of it.

There is also a ludicrous confusion in many persons' minds between protection and encouragement; they differ materially. "Protection" is saying to the commercial schoolboy, "Nobody shall hit you." "Encouragement," is saying to him, "That's the way to hit."

[1] The question of equivalence (namely, how much wine a man is to receive in return for so much corn, or how much coal in return for so much iron) is a quite separate one, which we will examine presently. For the time, let it be assumed that this equivalence has been determined, and that the Government order in exchange for a fixed weight of any article (called, suppose, *a*), is either for the return of that weight of the article itself, or of another fixed weight or the article *b*, or another of the article *c*, and so on.

in so far as he may have produced useful and consumed useless articles, or *vice versâ*. But if he does not use, or uses in part only, the order he receives, and lays aside some portion of it; and thus every day bringing his contribution to the national store, lays by some per-centage of the order received in exchange for it, he increases the national wealth daily by as much as he does not use of the received order, and to the same amount accumulates a monetary claim on the Government. It is of course always in his power, as it is his legal right, to bring forward this accumulation of claim, and at once to consume, destroy, or distribute, the sum of his wealth. Supposing he never does so, but dies, leaving his claim to others, he has enriched the state during his life by the quantity of wealth over which that claim extends, or has, in other words, rendered so much additional life possible in the state, of which additional life he bequeaths the immediate possibility to those whom he invests with his claim. Supposing him to cancel the claim, he would distribute this possibility of life among the nation at large.

We hitherto consider the Government itself as simply a conservative power, taking charge of the wealth entrusted to it.

But a Government may be far other than a conservative power, It may be on the one hand constructive, on the other destructive.

If a constructive, or improving power, using all the wealth entrusted to it to the best advantage, the nation is enriched in root and branch at once, and the Government is enabled for every order presented, to return a quantity of wealth greater than the order was written for, according to the fructification obtained in the interim.[1] This ability may be either concealed, in which case the currency does not completely represent the wealth of the country, or it may be manifested by the continual payment of the excess of value on each order, in which case there is (irrespectively, observe,

[1] The reader must be warned in advance that the conditions here supposed have nothing to do with the "interest" of money commonly so called.

of collateral results afterwards to be examined) a perpetual rise in the worth of the currency, that is to say, a fall in the price of all articles represented by it.

But if the Government be destructive, or a consuming power, it becomes unable to return the value received on the presentation of the order.

This inability may either (A) be concealed by meeting demands to the full, until it issue in bankruptcy, or in some form of national debt;—or (B) it may be concealed during oscillatory movements between destructiveness and productiveness, which result on the whole in stability;—or (C) it may be manifested by the consistent return of less than value received on each presented order, in which case there is a consistent fall in the worth of the currency, or rise in the price of the things represented by it.

Now, if for this conception of a central Government, we substitute that of another body of persons occupied in industrial pursuits, of whom each adds in his private capacity to the common store; so that the store itself, instead of remaining a public property of ascertainable quantity, for the guardianship of which a body of public men are responsible, becomes disseminated private property, each man giving in exchange for any article received from another, a general order for its equivalent in whatever other article the claimant may desire (such general order being payable by any member of the society in whose possession the demanded article may be found), we at once obtain an approximation to the actual condition of a civilized mercantile community, from which approximation we might easily proceed into still completer analysis. I purpose, however, to arrive at every result by the gradual expansion of the simpler conception; but I wish the reader to observe, in the meantime, that both the social conditons thus supposed (and I will by anticipation say also, all possible social conditions,) agree in two great points; namely, in the primal importance of the supposed national store or stock, and in its destructibility or improvability by the holders of it.

I. Observe that in both conditions, that of central Government-holding, and diffused private-holding, the quantity of stock is of the same national moment. In the one case, indeed, its amount may be known by examination of the persons to whom it is confided; in the other it cannot be known but by exposing the private affairs of every individual. But, known or unknown, its significance is the same under each condition. The riches of the nation consist in the abundance, and their wealth depends on the nature of this store.

II. In the second place, both conditions (and all other possible ones) agree in the destructibility or improvability of the store by its holders. Whether in private hands, or under Government charge, the national store may be daily consumed, or daily enlarged, by its possessors; and while the currency remains apparently unaltered, the property it represents may diminish or increase.

The first question, then, which we have to put under our simple conception of central Government, namely, "What store has it?" is one of equal importance, whatever may be the constitution of the state; while the second question—namely, "Who are the holders of the store?" involves the discussion of the constitution of the state itself.

The first inquiry resolves itself into three heads:—

1. What is the nature of the store?
2. What is its quantity in relation to the population?
3. What is its quantity in relation to the currency?

The second inquiry, into two:—

1. Who are the Holders of the store, and in what proportions?
2. Who are the Claimants of the store, (that is to say the holders of the currency,) and in what proportions?

We will examine the range of the first three questions in the present paper; of the two following, in the sequel.

1. Question First. What is the nature of the store? Has the nation hitherto worked for and gathered the right thing or the wrong? On that issue rest the possibilities of its life.

For example, let us imagine a society, of no great extent, occupied in procuring and laying up store of corn, wine, wool, silk, and other such preservable materials of food and clothing; and that it has a currency representing them. Imagine farther, that on days of festivity, the society discovering itself to derive satisfaction from pyrotechnics, gradually turns its attention more and more to the manufacture of gunpowder; so that an increasing number of labourers, giving what time they can spare to this branch of industry, bring increasing quantities of combustibles into the store, and use the general orders received in exchange to obtain such wine, wool, or corn as they may have need of. The currency remains the same, and represents precisely the same amount of material in the store, and of labour spent in producing it. But the corn and wine gradually vanish, and in their place, as gradually, appear sulphur and saltpetre; till at last, the labourers who have consumed corn and supplied nitre, presenting on a festal morning some of their currency to obtain material for the feast, discover that no amount of currency will command anything Festive, except Fire. The supply of rockets is unlimited, but that of food, limited in a quite final manner; and the whole currency in the hands of the society represents an infinite power of detonation, but none of existence.

This statement, caricatured as it may seem, is only exaggerated in assuming the persistence of the folly to extremity, unchecked, as in reality it would be, by the gradual rise in price of food. But it falls short of the actual facts of human life in expression of the depth and intensity of the folly itself. For a great part (the reader would not believe how great until he saw the statistics in detail) of the most earnest and ingenious industry of the world is spent in producing munitions of war; gathering, that is to say the materials, not of festive, but of consuming fire; filling its stores with all power of the instruments of pain, and all affluence of the ministries of death. It was no true *Trionfo della Morte* which men have seen and feared (sometimes scarcely feared) so long;—wherein

he brought them rest from their labours. We see and share another and higher form of his triumph now. Task-master, instead of Releaser, he rules the dust of the arena no less than of the tomb; and, content once in the grave whither man went, to make his works to cease and his devices to vanish,—now, in the busy city and on the serviceable sea, makes his work to increase, and his devices to multiply.

To this doubled loss, or negative power of labour, spent in producing means of destruction, we have to add in our estimate of the consequences of human folly, whatever more insidious waste of toil there is in production of unnecessary luxury. Such and such an occupation (it is said) supports so many labourers, because so many obtain wages in following it; but it is never considered that unless there be a supporting power in the product of the occupation, the wages given to one man are merely withdrawn from another. We cannot say of any trade that it maintains such and such a number of persons, unless we know how and where the money, now spent in the purchase of its produce, would have been spent, if that produce had not been manufactured. The purchasing funds truly support a number of people in making This; but (probably) leave unsupported an equal number who are making, or could have made That. The manufacturers of small watches thrive at Geneva;—it is well;—but where would the money spent on small watches have gone, had there been no small watches to buy?

If the so frequently uttered aphorism of mercantile economy —"labour is limited by capital," were true, this question would be a definite one. But it is untrue; and that widely. Out of a given quantity of funds for wages, more or less labour is to be had, according to the quantity of will with which we can inspire the workman; and the true limit of labour is only in the limit of this moral stimulus of the will, and of the bodily power. In an ultimate, but entirely unpractical sense, labour is limited by capital, as it is by matter —that is to say, where there is no material, there can be no

work,—but in the practical sense, labour is limited only by the great original capital[1] of Head, heart, and hand. Even in the most artificial relations of commerce, it is to capital as fire to fuel: out of so much fuel, you *can* have only so much fire;—but out of so much fuel you *shall* have so much fire, —not in proportion to the mass of combustibles, but to the force of wind that fans and water that quenches; and the appliance of both. And labour is furthered, as conflagration is, not so much by added fuel, as by admitted air.

For which reasons, I had to insert, above, the qualifying "probably;" for it can never be said positively that the purchase-money, or wages fund of any trade is withdrawn from some other trade. The object itself may be the stimulus of the production of the money which buys it; that is to say, the work by which the purchaser obtained the means of buying it, would not have been done by him, unless he had wanted that particular thing. And the production of any article not intrinsically (nor in the process of manufacture) injurious, is useful, if the desire of it causes productive labour in other directions.

In the national store, therefore, the presence of things intrinsically valueless does not imply an entirely correlative absence of things valuable. We cannot be certain that all the labour spent on vanity has been diverted from reality, and that for every bad thing produced, a precious thing has been lost. In great measure, the vain things represent the results of roused indolence; they have been carved, as toys, in extra time; and, if they had not been made, nothing else would have been made. Even to munitions of war this principle applies; they partly represent the work of men who, if they had not made spears, would never have made pruning hooks, and who are incapable of any activities but those of contest.

Thus then, finally, the nature of the store has to be considered under two main lights; the one, that of its immediate and actual utility; the other, that of the past national char-

[1] The aphorism, being hurried English for "labour is limited by want of capital," involves also awkward English in its denial, which cannot be helped.

acter which it signifies by its production, and future character which it must develope by its use. And the issue of this investigation will be to show us that Economy does not depend merely on principles of "demand and supply," but primarily on what is demanded, and what is supplied.

II. Question Second.—What is the quantity of the store in relation to the population?

It follows from what has been already stated that the accurate form in which this question has to be put is—"What quantity of each article composing the store exists in proportion to the real need for it by the population?" But we shall for the time assume, in order to keep all our terms at the simplest, that the store is wholly composed of useful articles, and accurately proportioned to the several needs for them.

Now it does not follow, because the store is large in proportion to the number of the people, that the people must be in comfort; nor because it is small, that they must be in distress. An active and economical race always produces more than it requires, and lives (if it is permitted to do so) in competence on the produce of its daily labour. The quantity of its store, great or small, is therefore in many respects indifferent to it, and cannot be inferred from its aspect. Similarly an inactive and wasteful population, which cannot live by its daily labour, but is dependent, partly or wholly, on consumption of its store, may be (by various difficulties, hereafter to be examined, in realizing or getting at such store) retained in a state of abject distress, though its possessions may be immense. But the results always involved in the magnitude of store are, the commercial power of the nation, its security, and its mental character. Its commercial power, in that according to the quantity of its store may be the extent of its dealings; its security, in that according to the quantity of its store are its means of sudden exertion or sustained endurance; and its character, in that certain conditions of civilization cannot be attained without permanent and continually accumulating store, of great intrinsic value, and of peculiar nature.

Now, seeing that these three advantages arise from largeness of store in proportion to population, the question arises immediately, "Given the store—is the nation enriched by diminution of its numbers? Are a successful national speculation, and a pestilence, economically the same thing?"

This is in part a sophistical question; such as it would be to ask whether a man was richer when struck by disease which must limit his life within a predicable period, than he was when in health. He is enabled to enlarge his current expenses, and has for all purposes a larger sum at his immediate disposal (for, given the fortune, the shorter the life, the larger the annuity); yet no man considers himself richer because he is condemned by his physician.

The logical reply is that, since Wealth is by definition only the means of life, a nation cannot be enriched by its own mortality. Or in shorter words, the life is more than the meat; and existence itself, more wealth than the means of existence. Whence, of two nations who have equal store, the more numerous is to be considered the richer, provided the type of the inhabitant be as high (for, though the relative bulk of their store be less, its relative efficiency, or the amount of effectual wealth, must be greater). But if the type of the population be deteriorated by increase of its numbers, we have evidence of poverty in its worst influence; and then, to determine whether the nation in its total may still be justifiably esteemed rich, we must set or weigh, the number of the poor against that of the rich.

To effect which piece of scale-work, it is of course necessary to determine, first, who are poor and who are rich; nor this only, but also how poor and how rich they are! Which will prove a curious thermometrical investigation; for we shall have to do for gold and for silver what we have done for quicksilver—determine, namely, their freezing point, their zero, their temperate and fever heat points; finally, their vaporescent point, at which riches, sometimes explosively, as lately in America, "make to themselves wings:"—and correspondently, the number of degrees *below* zero at which

poverty, ceasing to brace with any wholesome cold, burns to the bone.

For the performance of these operations, in the strictest sense scientific, we will first look to the existing so called "science" of Political Economy; we will ask it to define for us the comparatively and superlatively rich, and the comparatively and superlatively poor; and on its own terms—if any terms it can pronounce—examine, in our prosperous England, how many rich and how many poor people there are; and whether the quantity and intensity of the poverty is indeed so overbalanced by the quantity and intensity of wealth, that we may permit ourselves a luxurious blindness to it, and call ourselves, complacently, a rich country. And if we find no clear definition in the existing science, we will endeavour for ourselves to fix the true degrees of the Plutonic scale, and to apply them.

QUESTION THIRD.—What is the quantity of the store in relation to the Currency?

We have seen that the real worth of the currency, so far as dependent on its relation to the magnitude of the store, may vary within certain limits, without affecting its worth in exchange. The diminution or increase of the represented wealth may be unperceived, and the currency may be taken either for more or less than it is truly worth. Usually it is taken for more; and its power in exchange, or credit-power, is thus increased (or retained) up to a given strain upon its relation to existing wealth. This credit-power is of chief importance in the thoughts, because most sharply present to the experience, of a mercantile community: but the conditions of its stability and all other relations of the currency to the material store are entirely simple in principle, if not in action. Far other than simple are the relations of the currency to that "available labour" which by our definition it also represents. For this relation is involved not only with that of the magnitude of the store to the number, but with that of the magnitude of the store to the mind, of the population. Its proportion to their number, and the resulting worth of cur-

rency, are calculable; but its proportion to their will for labour is not. The worth of the piece of money which claims a given quantity of the store, is, in exchange, less or greater according to the facility of obtaining the same quantity of the same thing without having recourse to the store. In other words, it depends on the immediate Cost and Price of the thing. We must now, therefore, complete the definition of these terms.

All cost and price are counted in Labour. We must know first, therefore, what is to be counted *as* Labour.

I have already defined labour to be the Contest of the life of man with an opposite.[1] Literally, it is the quantity of "Lapse," loss, or failure of human life caused by any effort. It is usually confused with effort itself, or the application of power (opera); but there is much effort which is merely a mode of recreation, or of pleasure. The most beautiful actions of the human body, and the highest results of the human intelligence, are conditions, or achievements, of quite unlaborious, nay, of recreative, effort. But labour is the suffering in effort. It is the negative quantity, or quantity of de-feat which has to be counted against every Feat, and of de-fect which has to be counted against every Fact, or Deed of men. In brief, it is "that quantity of our toil which we die in."

We might, therefore, *à priori*, conjecture (as we shall ultimately find), that it cannot be bought, nor sold. Every thing else is bought and sold for Labour, but labour itself cannot be bought nor sold for anything, being priceless.[2] The idea that it is a commodity to be bought or sold, is the alpha and omega of Politico-Economic fallacy.

This being the nature of labour, the "Cost" of anything is the quantity of labour necessary to obtain it;—the quantity

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[1] That is to say, its only price is its return.

[2] The object of Political Economy is not to buy, nor to sell labour,—but to spare it. Every attempt to buy or sell it is, in the outcome, ineffectual;—so far as successful, it is not sale, but Betrayal; and the purchase-money is a part of that typical thirty pieces which bought, first the greatest of labours, and afterwards the burial field of the Stranger; for this purchase-money, being in its very smallness or vileness the exactly measured opposite of the "vilis annona amicorum," makes *all* men strangers to each other.

for which, or at which, it "stands" (constat). It is literally the "Constancy" of the thing;—you shall win it—move it—come at it—for no less than this.

Cost is measured and measurable only in "labor," not in "opera." It does not matter how much *power* a thing needs to produce it; it matters only how much *distress*. Generally the more the power it requires, the less the distress; so that the noblest works of man cost less than the meanest.

True labour, or spending of life, is either of the body, in fatigue or pain; of the temper or heart (as in perseverance of search for things,—patience in waiting for them,—fortitude or degradation in suffering for them, and the like), or of the intellect. All these kinds of labour are supposed to be included in the general term, and the quantity of labour is then expressed by the time it lasts. So that a unit of labour is "an hour's work" or a day's work, as we may determine.[1]

Cost, like value, is both intrinsic and effectual. Intrinsic cost is that of getting the thing in the right way; effectual cost is that of getting the thing in the way we set about it. But intrinsic cost cannot be made a subject of analytical investigation, being only partially discoverable, and that by long experience. Effectual cost is all that the political Economist can deal with; that is to say, the cost of the thing under existing circumstances, and by known processes.

Cost (irrespectively of any questions of demand or supply) varies with the quantity of the thing wanted, and with the number of persons who work for it. It is easy to get a little of some things, but difficult to get much; it is impossible to get some things with few hands, but easy to get them with many.

The cost and value of things, however difficult to determine accurately, are thus both dependent on ascertainable physical circumstances.[2]

[1] Only observe, as some labour is more destructive of life than other labour, the hour or day of the more destructive toil is supposed to include proportionate rest. Though men do not, or cannot, usually take such rest, except in death.

[2] There is, therefore, observe, no such thing as cheapness (in the common use of that term), without some error or injustice. A thing is said to be

But their price is dependent on the human will.

Such and such a thing is demonstrably good for so much. And it may demonstrably be had for so much.

But is remains questionable, and in all manner of ways questionable, whether I choose to give so much.[1]

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cheap, not because it is common, but because it is supposed to be sold under its worth. Everything has its proper and true worth at any given time, in relation to everything else; and at that worth should be bought and sold. If sold under it, it is cheap to the buyer by exactly so much as the seller loses, and no more. Putrid meat, at twopence a pound, is not "cheaper" than wholesome meat at sevenpence a pound; it is probably much dearer; but if, by watching your opportunity, you can get the wholesome meat for sixpence a pound, it is cheaper to you by a penny, which you have gained, and the seller has lost. The present rage for cheapness is either, therefore, simply and literally, a rage for badness of all commodities, or it is an attempt to find persons whose necessities will force them to let you have more than you should for your money. It is quite easy to produce such persons, and in large numbers; for the more distress there is in a nation, the more cheapness of this sort you can obtain, and your boasted cheapness is thus merely a measure of the extent of your national distress.

There is, indeed, a condition of apparent cheapness, which we confuse, in practice and in reasoning, with the other; namely, the real reduction in cost of articles by right application of labour. But in this case the article is only cheap with reference to its *former* price, the so-called cheapness is only our expression of the sensation of contrast between its former and existing prices. So soon as the new methods of producing the article are established, it ceases to be esteemed either cheap or dear, at the new price, as at the old one, and is felt to be cheap only when accident enables it to be purchased beneath this new value. And it is no advantage to produce the article more easily, except as it enables you to multiply your population. Cheapness of this kind is merely the discovery that more men can be maintained on the same ground; and the question, how many you will maintain in proportion to your means, remains exactly in the same terms that it did before.

A form of immediate cheapness results, however, in many cases, without distress, from the labour of a population where food is redundant, or where the labour by which the food is produced leaves much idle time on their hands, which may be applied to the production of "cheap" articles.

All such phenomena indicate to the political economist places where the labour is unbalanced. In the first case, the just balance is to be effected by taking labourers from the spot where the pressure exists, and sending them to that where food is redundant. In the second, the cheapness is a local accident, advantageous to the local purchaser, disadvantageous to the local producer. It is one of the first duties of commerce to extend the market, and thus give the local producer his full advantage.

Cheapness caused by natural accidents of harvest, weather, &c., is always counterbalanced, in due time, by natural scarcity, similarly caused. It is the part of wise government, and healthy commerce, so to provide in times and places of plenty for times and places of dearth, as that there shall never be waste, nor famine.

Cheapness caused by gluts of the market is merely a disease of clumsy and wanton commerce.

[1] Price has been already defined to be the quantity of labour which the possessor of a thing is willing to take for it. It is best to consider the price to be that fixed by the possessor, because the possessor has absolute power of refusing sale, while the purchaser has no absolute power of compelling it; but the effectual or market price is that at which their estimates coincide.

This choice is always a relative one. It is a choice to give a price for this, rather than for that;—a resolution to have the thing, if getting it does not involve the loss of a better thing. Price depends, therefore, not only on the cost of the commodity itself, but on its relation to the cost of every other attainable thing.

Farther. The *power* of choice is also a relative one. It depends not merely on our own estimate of the thing, but on everybody else's estimate; therefore on the number and force of the will of the concurrent buyers, and on the existing quantity of the thing in proportion to that number and force.

Hence the price of anything depends on four variables.

1. Its cost.
2. Its attainable quantity at that cost.
3. The number and power of the persons who want it.
4. The estimate they have formed of its desirableness.

(Its value only affects its price so far as it is contemplated in this estimate; perhaps, therefore, not at all.)

Now, in order to show the manner in which price is expressed in terms of a currency, we must assume these four quantities to be known, and the "estimate of desirableness," commonly called the Demand, to be certain. We will take the number of persons at the lowest. Let A and B be two labourers who "demand," that is to say, have resolved to labour for, two articles, *a* and *b*. Their demand for these articles (if the reader likes better, he may say their need) is to be absolute, existence depending on the getting these two things. Suppose, for instance, that they are bread and fuel, in a cold country, and let *a* represent the least quantity of bread and *b* the least quantity of fuel, which will support a man's life for a day. Let *a* be producible by an hour's labour, but *b* only by two hours' labour.

Then the *cost* of *a* is one hour, and of *b* two (cost, by our definition, being expressible in terms of time). If, therefore, each man worked both for his corn and fuel, each would have to work three hours a day. But they divide the labour for

its greater ease.[1] Then if A works three hours, he produces 3 *a*, which is one *a* more than both the men want. And if B works three hours, he produces only 1½ *b*, or half of *b* less than both want. But if A works three hours and B six, A has 3 *a*, and B has 3 *b*, a maintenance in the right proportion for both for a day and half; so that each might take half a day's rest. But as B has worked double time, the whole of this day's rest belongs in equity to him. Therefore the just exchange should be, A giving two *a* for one *b*, has one *a* and one *b*;—maintenance for a day. B giving one *b* for two *a*, has two *a* and two *b*;—maintenance for two days.

But B cannot rest on the second day, or A would be left without the article which B produces. Nor is there any means of making the exchange just, unless a third labourer is called in. Then one workman, A, produces *a*, and two, B and C, produce *b*:—A, working three hours, has three *a*;—B, three hours, 1½ *b*;—C three hours, 1½ *b*. B and C each give half of *b* for *a*, and all have their equal daily maintenance for equal daily work.

To carry the example a single step farther, let three articles, *a*, *b* and *c* be needed.

Let *a* need one hour's work, *b* two, and c four; then the day's work must be seven hours, and one man in a day's work can make 7 *a*, or 3½ *b*, or 1¾ *c*.

Therefore one A works for *a*, producing 7 *a*; two B's work for *b*, producing 7 *b*; four C's work for *c*, producing 7 *c*.

A has six *a* to spare, and gives two *a* for one *b*, and four *a* for one *c*. Each B has 2½ *b* to spare, and gives ½ *b* for one *a*, and two *b* for one *c*.

Each C has ¾ of *c* to spare, and gives ½ *c* for one *b*, and ¼ of *c* for one *a*.

And all have their day's maintenance.

Generally, therefore, it follows that if the demand is constant, the relative prices of things are as their costs, or as the quantities of labour involved in production.

[1] This "greater ease" ought to be allowed for by a diminution in the times of the divided work; but as the proportion of times would remain the same, I do not introduce this unnecessary complexity into the calculation.

Then, in order to express their prices in terms of a currency, we have only to put the currency into the form of orders for a certain quantity of any given article (with us it is in the form of orders for gold), and all quantities of other articles are priced by the relation they bear to the article which the currency claims.

But the worth of the currency itself is not in the slightest degree, founded more on the worth of the article which it either claims or consists in (as gold) than on the worth of every other article for which the gold is exchangeable. It is just as accurate to say, "so many pounds are worth an acre of land," as "an acre of land is worth so many pounds." The worth of gold, of land, of houses, and of food, and of all other things, depends at any moment on the existing quantities and relative demands for all and each; and a change in the worth of, or demand for, any one, involves an instantaneously correspondent change in the worth of, and demand for, all the rest—a change as inevitable and as accurately balanced (though often in its process as untraceable) as the change in volume of the outflowing river from some vast lake, caused by change in the volume of the inflowing streams, though no eye can trace, nor instrument detect motion either on its surface, or in the depth.

Thus, then, the real working power or worth of the currency is founded on the entire sum of the relative estimates formed by the population of its possessions; a change in this estimate in any direction (and therefore every change in the national character), instantly alters the value of money, in its second great function of commanding labour. But we must always carefully and sternly distinguish between this worth of currency, dependent on the conceived or appreciated value of what it represents, and the worth of it, dependent on the *existence* of what it represents. A currency is true, or false, in proportion to the security with which it gives claim to the possession of land, house, horse, or picture; but a currency is strong or weak, worth much, or worth little, in proportion to the degree of estimate in which the nation holds the house,

horse, or picture which is claimed. Thus the power of the English currency has been, till of late, largely based on the national estimate of horses and of wine: so that a man might always give any price to furnish choicely his stable, or his cellar; and receive public approval therefore: but if he gave the same sum to furnish his library, he was called mad, or a Biblio-maniac. And although he might lose his fortune by his horses, and his health or life by his cellar, and rarely lost either by his books, he was yet never called a Hippo-maniac nor an Oino-maniac; but only Biblio-maniac, because the current worth of money was understood to be legitimately founded on cattle and wine, but not on literature. The prices lately given at sales for pictures and MSS. indicate some tendency to change in the national character in this respect, so that the worth of the currency may even come in time to rest, in an acknowledged manner, somewhat on the state and keeping of the Bedford missal, as well as on the health of Caractacus or Blink Bonny; and old pictures be considered property, no less than old port. They might have been so before now, but that it is more difficult to choose the one than the other.

Now, observe, all these sources of variation in the power of the currency exist, wholly irrespective of the influence of vice, indolence, and improvidence. We have hitherto supposed, throughout the analysis, every professing labourer to labour honestly, heartily, and in harmony with his fellows. We have now to bring farther into the calculation the effects of relative industry, honour, and forethought; and thus to follow out the bearings of our second inquiry: Who are the holders of the Store and Currency, and in what proportions?

This, however, we must reserve for our next paper—noticing here only that, however distinct the several branches of the subject are, radically, they are so interwoven in their issues that we cannot rightly treat any one, till we have taken cognizance of all. Thus the quantity of the currency in proportion to number of population is materially influenced by

the number of the holders in proportion to the non-holders; and this again, by the number of holders of goods, or wealth, in proportion to the non-holders of goods. For as, by definition, the currency is a claim to goods which are not possessed, its quantity indicates the number of claimants in proportion to the number of holders; and the force and complexity of claim. For if the claims be not complex, currency as a means of exchange may be very small in quantity. A sells some corn to B, receiving a promise from B to pay in cattle, which A then hands over to C, to get some wine. C in due time claims the cattle from B; and B takes back his promise. These exchanges have, or might have been, all effected with a single coin or promise; and the proportion of the currency to the store would in such circumstances indicate only the circulating vitality of it—that is to say, the quantity and convenient divisibility of that part of the store which the *habits* of the nation keep in circulation. If a cattle breeder is content to live with his household chiefly on meat and milk, and does not want rich furniture, or jewels, or books—if a wine and corn grower maintains himself and his men chiefly on grapes and bread;—if the wives and daughters of families weave and spin the clothing of the household, and the nation, as a whole, remains content with the produce of its own soil and the work of its own hands, it has little occasion for circulating media. It pledges and promises little and seldom; exchanges only so far as exchange is necessary for life. The store belongs to the people in whose hands it is found, and money is little needed either as an expression of right, or practical means of division and exchange.

But in proportion as the habits of the nation become complex and fantastic (and they may be both without therefore being civilized), its circulating medium must increase in proportion to its store. If every one wants a little of everything, if food must be of many kinds, and dress of many fashions,—if multitudes live by work which, ministering to fancy, has

its pay measured by fancy, so that large prices will be given by one person for what is valueless to another,—if there are great inequalities of knowledge, causing great inequalities of estimate,—and finally, and worst of all, if the currency itself, from its largeness, and the power which the possession of it implies, becomes the sole object of desire with large numbers of the nation, so that the holding of it is disputed among them as the main object of life:—in each and all of these cases, the currency enlarges in proportion to the store, and as a means of exchange and division, as a bond of right, and as an expression of passion, plays a more and more important part in the nation's dealings, character, and life.

Against which part, when, as a bond of Right, it becomes too conspicuous and too burdensome, the popular voice is apt to be raised in a violent and irrational manner, leading to revolution instead of a remedy. Whereas all possibility of Economy depends on the clear assertion and maintenance of this bond of right, however burdensome. The first necessity of all economical government is to secure the unquestioned and unquestionable working of the great law of Property—that a man who works for a thing shall be allowed to get it, keep it, and consume it, in peace; and that he who does not eat his cake to-day, shall be seen, without grudging, to have his cake to-morrow. This, I say, is the first point to be secured by social law; without this, no political advance, nay, no political existence, is in any sort possible. Whatever evil, luxury, iniquity, may seem to result from it, this is nevertheless the first of all Equities; and to the enforcement of this, by law and by police-truncheon, the nation must always primarily set its mind—that the cupboard door may have a firm lock to it, and no man's dinner be carried off by the mob, on its way home from the baker's. Which, thus fearlessly asserting, we shall endeavour in next paper to consider how far it may be practicable for the mob itself, also, in due breadth of dish, to have dinners to carry home.

III.

LABOUR AND TRADE: THE DISEASE OF DESIRE

It will be seen by reference to the last paper that our present task is to examine the relation of holders of store to holders of currency; and of both to those who hold neither. In order to do this, we must determine on which side we are to place substances such as gold, commonly known as bases of currency. By aid of previous definitions the reader will now be able to understand closer statements than have yet been possible.

The currency of any country consists of every document acknowledging debt which is transferable in the country.

This transferableness depends upon its intelligibility and credit. Its intelligibility depends chiefly on the difficulty of forging anything like it;—its credit much on national character, but ultimately always on the existence of substantial means of meeting its demand.

As the degrees of transferableness are variable, (some documents passing only in certain places, and others passing, if at all, for less than their inscribed value,) both the mass and, so to speak, fluidity, of the currency, are variable. True or perfect currency flows freely, like a pure stream; it becomes sluggish or stagnant in proportion to the quantity of less transferable matter which mixes with it, adding to its bulk, but diminishing its purity. Substances of intrinsic value, such as gold, mingle also with the currency, and increase, while they modify, its power; these are carried by it as stones are carried by a torrent, sometimes momentarily impeding, sometimes concentrating its force, but not affecting its purity. These substances of intrinsic value may be also stamped or signed so as to become acknowledgments of debt, and then become, so far as they operate independently of their intrinsic value, part of the real currency.

Deferring consideration of minor forms of currency, consisting of documents bearing private signature, we will ex-

amine the principle of legally authorized or national currency.

This, in its perfect condition, is a form of public acknowledgment of debt, so regulated and divided that any person presenting a commodity of tried worth in the public market, shall, if he please, receive in exchange for it a document giving him claim to the return of its equivalent, (1) in any place, (2) at any time, and (3) in any kind.

When currency is quite healthy and vital, the persons entrusted with its management are always able to give on demand either,

A. The assigning document for the assigned quantity of goods. Or,

B. The assigned quantity of goods for the assigning document.

If they cannot give document for goods, the national exchange is at fault.

If they cannot give goods for document, the national credit is at fault.

The nature and power of the document are therefore to be examined under the three relations which it bears to Place, Time, and Kind.

1. It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth in any Place. Its use in this function is to save carriage, so that parting with a bushel of corn in London, we may receive an order for a bushel of corn at the Antipodes, or elsewhere. To be perfect in this use, the substance of currency must be to the maximum portable, credible, and intelligible. Its non-acceptance or discredit results always from some form of ignorance or dishonour: so far as such interruptions rise out of differences in denomination, there is no ground for their continuance among civilized nations. It may be convenient in one country to use chiefly copper for coinage, in another silver, and in another gold,—reckoning accordingly in centimes, francs, or sequins; but that a French franc should be different in weight from an English shilling, and an Austrian zwanziger vary in weight and alloy from both, is wanton loss of commercial power.

2. It gives claim to the return of equivalent wealth at any Time. In this second use, currency is the exponent of accumulation: it renders the laying up of store at the command of individuals unlimitedly possible;—whereas, but for its intervention, all gathering would be confined within certain limits by the bulk of property, or by its decay, or the difficulty of its guardianship. "I will pull down my barns and build greater," cannot be a daily saying; and all material investment is enlargement of care. The national currency transfers the guardianship of the store to many; and preserves to the original producer the right of re-entering on its possession at any future period.

3. It gives claim (practical, though not legal) to the return of equivalent wealth in any Kind. It is a transferable right, not merely to this or that, but to anything; and its power in this function is proportioned to the range of choice. If you give a child an apple or a toy, you give him a determinate pleasure, but if you give him a penny, an indeterminate one, proportioned to the range of selection offered by the shops in the village. The power of the world's currency is similarly in proportion to the openness of the world's fair, and commonly, enhanced by the brilliancy of external aspect, rather than solidity of its wares.

We have said that the currency consists of orders for equivalent goods. If equivalent, their quality must be guaranteed. The kinds of goods chosen for specific claim must, therefore, be capable of test, while, also, that a store may be kept in hand to meet the call of the currency, smallness of bulk, with great relative value, is desirable; and indestructibility, over at least a certain period, essential.

Such indestructibility, and facility of being tested, are united in gold; its intrinsic value is great, and its imaginary value greater; so that, partly through indolence, partly through necessity and want of organization, most nations have agreed to take gold for the only basis of their currencies;—with this grave disadvantage, that its portability enabling the metal to become an active part of the medium of exchange,

the stream of the currency itself becomes opaque with gold—half currency and half commodity, in unison of functions which partly neutralize, partly enhance each other's force.

They partly neutralize, since in so far as the gold is commodity, it is bad currency, because liable to sale; and in so far as it is currency, it is bad commodity, because its exchange value interferes with its practical use. Especially its employment in the higher branches of the arts becomes unsafe on account of its liability to be melted down for exchange.

Again. They partly enhance, since in so far as the gold has acknowledged intrinsic value, it is good currency, because everywhere acceptable; and in so far as it has legal exchangeable value, its worth as a commodity is increased. We want no gold in the form of dust or crystal; but we seek for it coined, because in that form it will pay baker and butcher. And this worth in exchange not only absorbs a large quantity in that use,[1] but greatly increases the effect on the imagination of the quantity used in the arts. Thus, in brief, the force of the functions is increased, but their precision blunted by their unison.

These inconveniences, however, attach to gold as a basis of currency on account of its portability and preciousness. But a far greater inconvenience attaches to it as the only legal basis of currency. Imagine gold to be only attainable in masses weighing several pounds each, and its value, like that of malachite or marble, proportioned to its largeness of bulk;—it could not then get itself confused with the currency in daily use, but it might still remain as its basis; and this second

[1] The waste of labour in obtaining the gold, though it cannot be estimated by help of any existing data, may be understood in its bearing on entire economy by supposing it limited to transactions between two persons. If two farmers in Australia have been exchanging corn and cattle with each other for years, keeping their accounts of reciprocal debt in any simple way, the sum of the possessions of either would not be diminished, though the part of it which was lent or borrowed were only reckoned by marks on a stone, or notches on a tree; and the one counted himself accordingly, so many scratches, or so many notches, better than the other. But it would soon be seriously diminished if, discovering gold in their fields, each resolved only to accept golden counters for a reckoning; and accordingly, whenever he wanted a sack of corn or a cow, was obliged to go and wash sand for a week before he could get the means of giving a receipt for them.

inconvenience would still affect it, namely, that its significance as an expression of debt, varies, as that of every other article would, with the popular estimate of its desirableness, and with the quantity offered in the market. My power of obtaining other goods for gold depends always on the strength of public passion for gold, and on the limitation of its quantity, so that when either of two things happen—that the world esteems gold less, or finds it more easily—my right of claim is in that degree effaced; and it has been even gravely maintained that a discovery of a mountain of gold would cancel the National Debt; in other words, that men may be paid for what costs much in what costs nothing. Now, it is true that there is little chance of sudden convulsion in this respect; the world will not rapidly increase in wisdom so as to despise gold, and perhaps may even desire it more eagerly the more easily it is obtained; nevertheless, the right of debt ought not to rest on a basis of imagination; nor should the frame of a national currency vibrate with every miser's panic and every merchant's imprudence.

There are two methods of avoiding this insecurity, which would have been fallen upon long ago, if, instead of calculating the conditions of the supply of gold, men had only considered how the world might live and manage its affairs without gold at all.[1] One is, to base the currency on substances of truer intrinsic value; the other, to base it on several substances instead of one. If I can only claim gold, the discovery of a golden mountain starves me; but if I can claim bread, the discovery of a continent of cornfields need not trouble me. If, however, I wish to exchange my bread for other things, a good harvest will for the time limit my power in this respect; but if I can claim either bread, iron, or silk at pleasure, the

[1] It is difficult to estimate the curious futility of discussions such as that which lately occupied a section of the British Association, on the absorption of gold, while no one can produce even the simplest of the data necessary for the inquiry. To take the first occurring one,—What means have we of ascertaining the weight of gold employed this year in the toilettes of the women of Europe (not to speak of Asia); and, supposing it known, what means of conjecturing the weight by which, next year, their fancies, and the changes of style among their jewellers, will diminish or increase it?

standard of value has three feet instead of one, and will be proportionately firm. Thus, ultimately the steadiness of currency depends upon the breadth of its base; but the difficulty of organization increasing with this breadth, the discovery of the condition at once safest and most convenient can only be by long analysis, which must for the present be deferred. Gold or silver[1] may always be retained in limited use, as a luxury of coinage and questionless standard, of one weight and alloy among all nations, varying only in the die. The purity of coinage, when metallic, is closely indicative of the honesty of the system of revenue, and even of the general dignity of the State.[2]

Whatever the article or articles may be which the national currency promises to pay, a premium on that article indicates bankruptcy of the Government in that proportion, the division of its assets being restrained only by the remaining confidence of the holders of notes in the return of prosperity to the firm. Incontrovertible currencies, those of forced acceptance, or of unlimited issue, are merely various modes of disguising taxation, and delaying its pressure, until it is too late to interfere with its causes. To do away with the possibility of such disguise would have been among the first results of a true economical science, had any such existed; but there have been too many motives for the concealment, so long as it could by any artifices be maintained, to permit hitherto even the founding of such a science.

And indeed, it is only through evil conduct, wilfully persisted in, that there is any embarrassment either in the theory or working of currency. No exchequer is ever embarrassed, nor is any financial question difficult of solution, when people

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[1] Perhaps both; perhaps silver only. It may be found expedient ultimately to leave gold free for use in the arts. As a means of reckoning, the standard might be, and in some cases has already been, entirely ideal.—See Mill's *Political Economy*, book iii. chap. 7, at beginning.

[2] The purity of the drachma and sequin were not without significance of the state of intellect, art, and policy, both in Athens and Venice;—a fact first impressed upon me ten years ago, when, in taking daguerreotypes of Venetian architecture, I found no purchaseable gold pure enough to gild them with, but that of the old Venetian sequin.

keep their practice honest, and their heads cool. But when governments lose all office of pilotage, protection, scrutiny, and witness; and live only in magnificence of proclaimed larceny, effulgent mendacity, and polished mendicity: or when the people, choosing Speculation (the s usually redundant in the spelling) instead of Toil, pursue no dishonesty with chastisement, that each may with impunity take his dishonest turn; and enlarge their lust of wealth through ignorance of its use, making their harlot of the dust, and setting Earth the Mother at the mercy of Earth the Destroyer, so that she has to seek in hell the children she left playing in the meadows,—there are no tricks of financial terminology that will save them; all signature and mintage do but magnify the ruin they retard; and even the riches that remain, stagnant or current, change only from the slime of Avernus to the sand of Phlegethon;—quicksand at the embouchure;—land fluently recommended by recent auctioneers as "eligible for building leases."

Finally, then, the power of true currency is fourfold.

1. Credit power. Its worth in exchange, dependent on public opinion of the stability and honesty of the issuer.

2. Real worth. Supposing the gold, or whatever else the currency expressly promises, to be required from the issuer, for all his notes; and that the call cannot be met in full. Then the actual worth of the document (whatever its credit power) would be, and its actual worth at any moment is to be defined as being, what the division of the assets of the issuer, and his subsequent will to work, would produce for it.

3. The exchange power of its base. Granting that we can get five pounds in gold for our note, it remains a question how much of other things we can get for five pounds in gold. The more of other things exist, and the less gold, the greater this power.

4. The power over labour, exercised by the given quantity of the base, or of the things to be got for it. The question in this case is, how much work, and (question of questions) *whose* work, is to be had for the food which five pounds will

buy. This depends on the number of the population, on their gifts, and on their dispositions, with which, down to their slightest humours, and up to their strongest impulses, the power of the currency varies; and in this last of its ranges—the range of passion, price, or praise, (converso in pretium Deo), is at once least, and greatest.

Such being the main conditions of national currency, we proceed to examine those of the total currency, under the broad definition, "transferable acknowledgment of debt;"[1] among the many forms of which there are in effect only two, distinctly opposed; namely, the acknowledgments of debts which will be paid, and of debts which will not. Documents, whether in whole or part, of bad debt, being to those of good debt as bad money to bullion, we put for the present these forms of imposture aside (as in analyzing a metal we should wash it clear of dross), and then range, in their exact quantities, the true currency of the country on one side, and the store or property of the country on the other. We place gold, and all such substances, on the side of documents, as far as they operate by signature;—on the side of store as far as they operate by value. Then the currency represents the quantity

[1] Under which term, observe, we include all documents of debt which, being honest, might be transferable, though they practically are not transferred; while we exclude all documents which are in reality worthless, though in fact transferred temporarily, as bad money is. The document of honest debt, not transferred, is merely to paper currency as gold withdrawn from circulation is to that of bullion. Much confusion has crept into the reasoning on this subject from the idea that withdrawal from circulation is a definable state, whereas it is a gradated state, and indefinable. The sovereign in my pocket is withdrawn from circulation as long as I choose to keep it there. It is in no other wise withdrawn if I bury it, nor even if I choose to make it, and others, into a golden cup, and drink out of them; since a rise in the price of the wine, or of other things, may at any time cause me to melt the cup and throw it back into currency: and the bullion operates on the prices of the things in the market as directly, though not as forcibly, while it is in the form of a cup, as it does in the form of a sovereign. No calculation can be founded on my humour in either case. If I like to handle rouleaus, and therefore keep a quantity of gold, to play with, in the form of jointed basaltic columns, it is all one in its effect on the market as if I kept it in the form of twisted filigree or, steadily amicus lamnæ, beat the narrow gold piece into broad ones, and dined off them. The probability is greater that I break the rouleau than that I melt the plate; but the increased probability is not calculable. Thus, documents are only withdrawn from the currency when cancelled, and bullion when it is so effectually lost as that the probability of finding it is no greater than of finding new gold in the mine.

of debt in the country, and the store the quantity of its possession. The ownership of all the property is divided between the holders of currency and holders of store, and whatever the claiming value of the currency is at any moment, that value is to be deducted from the riches of the store-holders, the deduction being practically made in the payment of rent for houses and lands, of interest on stock, and in other ways to be hereafter examined. At present I wish only to note the broad relations of the two great classes—the currency-holders and store-holders.[1] Of course they are partly united, most monied men having possessions of land or other goods; but they are separate in their nature and functions. The currency-holders as a class regulate the demand for labour, and the store-holders the laws of it; the currency-holders determine what shall be produced, and the store-holders the conditions of its production. Farther, as true currency represents by definition debts which will be paid, it represents either the debtor's wealth, or his ability and willingness; that is to say, either wealth existing in his hands transferred to him by the creditor, or wealth which, as he is at some time surely to return it, he is either increasing, or, if diminishing, has the will and strength to reproduce. A sound currency therefore, as by its increase it represents enlarging debt, represents also enlarging means; but in this curious way, that

[1] They are (up to the amount of the currency) simply creditors and debtors —the commercial types of the two great sects of humanity which those words describe; for debt and credit are of course merely the mercantile forms of the words "duty" and "creed," which give the central ideas: only it is more accurate to say "faith" than "creed," because creed has been applied carelessly to mere forms of words. Duty properly signifies whatever in substance or act one person owes to another, and faith the other's trust in his rendering it. The French "devoir" and "foi" are fuller and clearer words than ours; for, faith being the passive of fact, foi comes straight through fides from fio; and the French keep the group of words formed from the infinitive—fieri, "se fier," "se défier," "défiance," and the grand following "défi." Our English "affiance," "defiance," "confidence," "diffidence," retain accurate meaning; but our "faithful" has become obscure from being used for "faith-worthy," as well as "full of faith." "His name that sat on him was called Faithful and True."

Trust is the passive of true saying, as faith is the passive of due doing; and the right learning of these etymologies, which are in the strictest sense only to be learned "by heart," is of considerably more importance to the youth of a nation than its reading and ciphering.

a certain quantity of it marks the deficiency of the wealth of the country from what it would have been if that currency had not existed.[1] In this respect it is like the detritus of a mountain; assume that it lies at a fixed angle, and the more the detritus, the larger must be the mountain; but it would have been larger still, had there been none.

Finally, though, as above stated, every man possessing money has usually also some property beyond what is necessary for his immediate wants, and men possessing property usually also hold currency beyond what is necessary for their immediate exchanges, it mainly determines the class to which they belong, whether in their eyes the money is an adjunct of the property, or the property of the money. In the first case the holder's pleasure is in his possessions, and in his money subordinately, as the means of bettering or adding to them. In the second, his pleasure is in his money, and in his possessions only as representing it. In the first case the money is as an atmosphere surrounding the wealth, rising from it and raining back upon it; but in the second, it is as a deluge, with the wealth floating, and for the most part perishing in it. The shortest distinction between the men is that the one wishes always to buy, and the other to sell.

Such being the great relations of the classes, their several characters are of the highest importance to the nation; for on the character of the store-holders depends the preservation, display, and serviceableness of its wealth;—on that of the currency-holders its nature, and in great part its distribution; on that of both, its reproduction.

[1] For example, suppose an active peasant, having got his ground into good order and built himself a comfortable house, finding still time on his hands, sees one of his neighbours little able to work, and ill lodged, and offers to build him also a house, and to put his land in order, on condition of receiving for a given period rent for the building and tithe of the fruits. The offer is accepted, and a document given promissory of rent and tithe. This note is money. It can only be good money if the man who has incurred the debt so far recovers his strength as to be able to take advantage of the help he has received, and meet the demand of the note; if he lets his house fall to ruin, and his field to waste, his promissory note will soon be valueless: but the existence of the note at all is a consequence of his not having worked so stoutly as the other. Let him gain as much as to be able to pay back the entire debt; the note is cancelled, and we have two rich store-holders and no currency.

The store-holders are either constructive, neutral, or destructive; and in subsequent papers we shall, with respect to every kind of wealth, examine the relative power of the store-holder for its improvement or destruction; and we shall then find it to be of incomparably greater importance to the nation in whose hands the thing is put, than how much of it is got; and that the character of the holders may be conjectured by the quality of the store, for such and such a man always asks for such and such a thing; nor only asks for it, but if to be bettered, betters it: so that possession and possessor reciprocally act on each other through the entire sum of national possession. The base nation asking for base things sinks daily to deeper vileness of nature and of use; while the noble nation, asking for noble things, rises daily into diviner eminence in both; the tendency to degradation being surely marked by ἀταξία, carelessness as to the hands in which things are put, competition for the acquisition of them, disorderliness in accumulation, inaccuracy in reckoning, and bluntness in conception as to the entire nature of possession.

Now, the currency-holders always increase in number and influence in proportion to the bluntness of nature and clumsiness of the store-holders; for the less use people can make of things the more they tire of them, and want to change them for something else, and all frequency of change increases the quantity and power of currency; while the large currency-holder himself is essentially a person who never has been able to make up his mind as to what he will have, and proceeds, therefore, in vague collection and aggregation, with more and more infuriate passion, urged by complacency in progress and pride of conquest.

While, however, there is this obscurity in the nature of possession of currency, there is a charm in the *absoluteness* of it, which is to some people very enticing. In the enjoyment of real property others must partly share. The groom has some enjoyment of the stud, and the gardener of the garden; but the money is, or seems shut up; it is wholly enviable.

No one else can have part in any complacencies arising from it.

The power of arithmetical comparison is also a great thing to unimaginative people. They know always they are so much better than they were, in money; so much better than others, in money; wit cannot be so compared, nor character. My neighbour cannot be convinced I am wiser than he is, but he can that I am worth so much more; and the universality of the conviction is no less flattering than its clearness. Only a few can understand, none measure, superiorities in other things; but everybody can understand money, and count it.

Now, these various temptations to accumulation would be politically harmless if what was vainly accumulated had any fair chance of being wisely spent. For as accumulation cannot go on for ever, but must some day end in its reverse—if this reverse were indeed a beneficial distribution and use, as irrigation from reservoir, the fever of gathering, though perilous to the gatherer, might be serviceable to the community. But it constantly happens (so constantly, that it may be stated as a political law having few exceptions), that what is unreasonably gathered is also unreasonably spent by the persons into whose hands it finally falls. Very frequently it is spent in war, or else in a stupifying luxury, twice hurtful, both in being indulged by the rich and witnessed by the poor. So that the *mal tener* and *mal dare* are as correlative as complementary colours; and the circulation of wealth, which ought to be soft, steady, strong, far sweeping, and full of warmth, like the Gulf stream, being narrowed into an eddy, and concentrated on a point, changes into the alternate suction and surrender of Charybdis. Which is indeed, I doubt not, the true meaning of that marvellous fable, "infinite," as Bacon said of it, "in matter of meditation."

This disease of desire having especial relation to the great art of Exchange, or Commerce, we must, in order to complete our code of first principles, shortly state the nature and limits of that art.

As the currency conveys right of choice out of many things in exchange for one, so Commerce is the agency by which the power of choice is obtained; and countries producing only timber can obtain for their timber silk and gold; or, naturally producing only jewels and frankincense, can obtain for them cattle and corn. In this function commerce is of more importance to a country in proportion to the limitations of its products and the restlessness of its fancy;—generally of greater importance towards Northern latitudes.

Commerce is necessary, however, not only to exchange local products, but local skill. Labour requiring the agency of fire can only be given abundantly in cold countries; labour requiring suppleness of body and sensitiveness of touch only in warm ones; labour involving accurate vivacity of thought only in temperate ones; while peculiar imaginative actions are produced by extremes of heat and cold, and of light and darkness. The production of great art is limited to climates warm enough to admit of repose in the open air, and cool enough to render such repose delightful. Minor variations in modes of skill distinguish every locality. The labour which at any place is easiest, is in that place cheapest; and it becomes often desirable that products raised in one country should be wrought in another. Hence have arisen discussions on "International values" which will be one day remembered as highly curious exercises of the human mind. For it will be discovered, in due course of tide and time, that international value is regulated just as inter-provincial or inter-parishional value is. Coals and hops are exchanged between Northumberland and Kent on absolutely the same principles as iron and wine between Lancashire and Spain. The greater breadth of an arm of the sea increases the cost, but does not modify the principle of exchange; and a bargain written in two languages will have no other economical results than a bargain written in one. The distances of nations are measured not by seas, but by ignorances; and their divisions determined, not by dialects, but by enmities.

Of course, a system of international values may always be

constructed if we assume a relation of moral law to physical geography; as, for instance, that it is right to cheat across a river, though not across a road; or across a lake, though not across a river; or over a mountain, though not across a lake, &c.:—again, a system of such values may be constructed by assuming similar relations of taxation to physical geography; as, for instance, that an article should be taxed in crossing a river, but not in crossing a road; or in being carried over a mountain, but not over a ferry, &c.: such positions are indeed not easily maintained when once put in logical form: but one law of international value is maintainable in any form; namely, that the farther your neighbour lives from you, and the less he understands you, the more you are bound to be true in your dealings with him; because your power over him is greater in proportion to his ignorance, and his remedy more difficult in proportion to his distance.

I have just said the breadth of sea increases the cost of exchange. Exchange, or commerce, as such, is always costly; the sum of the value of the goods being diminished by the cost of their conveyance, and by the maintenance of the persons employed in it; so that it is only when there is advantage to both producers (in getting the one thing for the other), greater than the loss in conveyance, that the exchange is expedient. And it is only justly conducted when the porters kept by the producers, (commonly called merchants) look only for pay, and not for profit. For in just commerce there are but three parties—the two persons or societies exchanging and the agent or agents of exchange: the value of the things to be exchanged is known by both the exchangers, and each receives equivalent value, neither gaining nor losing (for whatever one gains the other loses). The intermediate agent is paid an equal and known per-centage by both, partly for labour in conveyance, partly for care, knowledge, and risk; every attempt at concealment of the amount of the pay indicates either effort on the part of the agent to obtain exorbitant per-centage, or effort on the part of the exchangers to refuse him a just one. But for the most part it is the first,

namely, the effort on the part of the merchant to obtain larger profit (so-called) by buying cheap and selling dear. Some part, indeed, of this larger gain is deserved, and might be openly demanded, because it is the reward of the merchant's knowledge, and foresight of probable necessity: but the greater part of such gain is unjust; and unjust in this most fatal way, that it depends first on keeping the exchangers ignorant of the exchange value of the articles, and secondly, on taking advantage of the buyer's need and the seller's poverty. It is, therefore, one of the essential, and quite the most fatal, forms of usury; for usury means merely taking an exorbitant sum for the use of anything, and it is no matter whether the exorbitance is on loan or exchange, in rent or in price—the essence of the usury being that it is obtained by advantage of opportunity or necessity, and not as due reward for labour. All the great thinkers, therefore, have held it to be unnatural and impious, in so far as it feeds on the distress of others, or their folly. Nevertheless, attempts to repress it by law, (in other words, to regulate prices by law so far as their variations depend on iniquity, and not on nature) must for ever be ineffective; though Plato, Bacon, and the First Napoleon—all three of them men who knew somewhat more of humanity than the "British merchant" usually does, tried their hands at it, and have left some (probably) good moderative forms of law, which we will examine in their place. But the only final check upon it must be radical purifying of the national character, for being, as Bacon calls it, "concessum propter duritiem cordis," it is to be done away with by touching the heart only; not, however, without medicinal law —as in the case of the other permission, "propter duritiem." But in this, more than in anything (though much in all, and though in this he would not himself allow of their application, for his own laws against usury are sharp enough), Plato's words are true in the fourth book of the Polity, that neither drugs, nor charms, nor burnings, will touch a deep-lying political sore, any more than a deep bodily one; but only right and utter change of constitution: and that "they do but lose

their labour who think that by any tricks of law they can get the better of these mischiefs of intercourse, and see not that they hew at a Hydra."

And indeed this Hydra seems so unslayable, and sin sticks so fast between the joinings of the stones of buying and selling, that "to trade" in things, or literally "cross-give" them, has warped itself, by the instinct of nations, into their worst words for fraud; for, because in trade there cannot but be trust, and it seems also that there cannot but also be injury in answer to it, what is merely fraud between enemies becomes treachery among friends: and "trader," "traditor" and "traitor" are but the same word. For which simplicity of language there is more reason than at first appears; for as in true commerce there is no "profit," so in true commerce there is no "sale." The idea of sale is that of an interchange between enemies respectively endeavoring to get the better one of another; but commerce is an exchange between friends; and there is no desire but that it should be just, any more than there would be between members of the same family. The moment there is a bargain over the pottage, the family relation is dissolved:—typically, "the days of mourning for my father are at hand." Whereupon follows the resolve "then will I slay my brother."

This inhumanity of mercenary commerce is the more notable because it is a fulfilment of the law that the corruption of the best is the worst. For as, taking the body natural for symbol of the body politic, the governing and forming powers may be likened to the brain, and the labouring to the limbs, the mercantile, presiding over circulation and communication of things in changed utilities, is symbolized by the heart; which if it harden, all is lost. And this is the ultimate lesson which the leader of English intellect meant for us (a lesson, indeed, not all his own, but part of the old wisdom of humanity), in the tale of the *Merchant of Venice;* in which the true and incorrupt merchant,—kind and free, beyond every other Shakespearian conception of men,—is opposed to the corrupted merchant, or usurer; the lesson being deepened by

the expression of the strange hatred which the corrupted merchant bears to the pure one, mixed with intense scorn,—

"This is the fool that lent out money gratis; look to him, jailor," (as to lunatic no less than criminal) the enmity, observe, having its symbolism literally carried out by being aimed straight at the heart, and finally foiled by a literal appeal to the great moral law that flesh and blood cannot be weighed, enforced by "Portia" ("Portion"), the type of divine Fortune, found, not in gold, nor in silver, but in lead, that is to say, in endurance and patience, not in splendour; and finally taught by her lips also, declaring, instead of the law and quality of "merces," the greater law and quality of mercy, which is not strained, but drops as the rain, blessing him that gives and him that takes. And observe that this "mercy" is not the mean "Misericordia," but the mighty "Gratia," answered by Gratitude, (observe Shylock's leaning on the, to him detestable, word *gratis,* and compare the relations of Grace to Equity given in the second chapter of the second book of the *Memorabilia*); that is to say, it is the gracious or loving, instead of the strained, or competing manner, of doing things, answered, not only with "merces" or pay, but with "merci" or thanks. And this is indeed the meaning of the great benediction "Grace, mercy, and peace," for there can be no peace without grace, (not even by help of rifled cannon), nor even without triplicity of graciousness, for the Greeks, who began but with one Grace, had to open their scheme into three before they had done.

With the usual tendency of long repeated thought, to take the surface for the deep, we have conceived these goddesses as if they only gave loveliness to gesture; whereas their true function is to give graciousness to deed, the other loveliness arising naturally out of that. In which function Charis becomes Charitas; and has a name and praise even greater than that of Faith or Truth, for these may be maintained sullenly and proudly; but Charis is in her countenance always gladdening (Aglaia), and in her service instant and humble; and the true wife of Vulcan, or Labour. And it is not until her

sincerity of function is lost, and her mere beauty contemplated instead of her patience, that she is born again of the foam flake, and becomes Aphrodité; then only capable of joining herself to War and to the enmities of men, instead of to labour and their services. Therefore the fable of Mars and Venus is chosen by Homer, picturing himself as Demodocus, to sing at the games in the court of Alcinous. Phæacia is the Homeric island of Atlantis; an image of noble and wise government, concealed, how slightly! merely by the change of a short vowel for a long one in the name of its queen; yet misunderstood by all later writers, even by Horace in his "pinguis, Phæax que," &c. That fable expresses the perpetual error of men in thinking that grace and dignity can only be reached by the soldier, and never by the artizan; so that commerce and the useful arts have had the honour and beauty taken away, and only the Fraud [1] and Pain left to them, with the lucre. Which is, indeed, one great reason of the continual blundering about the offices of government with respect to commerce. The higher classes are ashamed to deal with it; and though ready enough to fight for, (or occasionally against) the people,—to preach to them—or judge them, will not break bread for them; the refined upper servant who has

[1] While I have traced the finer and higher laws of this matter for those whom they concern, I have also to note the material law— vulgarly expressed in the proverb, "Honesty is the best policy." That proverb is indeed wholly inapplicable to matters of private interest. It is not true that honesty, as far as material gain is concerned, profits individuals. A clever and cruel knave will in a mixed society always be richer than an honest person can be. But Honesty is the best "policy," if policy mean practice of state. For fraud gains nothing in a state. It only enables the knaves in it to live at the expense of honest people; while there is for every act of fraud, however small, a loss of wealth to the community. Whatever the fraudulent person gains, some other person loses, as fraud produces nothing; and there is, *besides*, the loss of the time and thought spent in accomplishing the fraud, and of the strength otherwise obtainable by mutual help (not to speak of the fevers of anxiety and jealousy in the blood, which are a heavy physical loss, as I will show in due time). Practically, when the nation is deeply corrupt, cheat answers to cheat; every one is in turn imposed upon, and there is to the body politic the dead loss of the ingenuity, together with the incalculable mischief of the injury to each defrauded person, producing collateral effect unexpectedly. My neighbour sells me bad meat: I sell him in return flawed iron. We neither of us get one atom of pecuniary advantage on the whole transaction, but we both suffer unexpected inconveniences;—my men get scurvy, and his cattle-truck runs off the rails.

willingly looked after the burnishing of the armoury and ordering of the library, not liking to set foot in the larder.

Farther still. As Charis becomes Charitas on the one side, she becomes—better still—Chara, Joy, on the other; or rather this is her very mother's milk and the beauty of her childhood; for God brings no enduring Love, nor any other good, out of pain; nor out of contention; but out of joy and harmony. And in this sense, human and divine, music and gladness, and the measures of both, come into her name; and Cher becomes full-vowelled Cheer, and Cheerful; and Chara, companioned, opens into Choir and Choral.

And lastly. As Grace passes into Freedom of action, Charis becomes Eleutheria, or Liberality; a form of liberty quite curiously and intensely different from the thing usually understood by "Liberty" in modern language: indeed, much more like what some people would call slavery: for a Greek always understood, primarily, by liberty, deliverance from the law of his own passions (or from what the Christian writers call bondage of corruption), and this a complete liberty: not having to resist the passion, but making it fawn upon, and follow him—(this may be again partly the meaning of the fawning beasts about the Circean cave; so, again, George Herbert—

> Correct thy passion's spite,
> Then may the beasts draw thee to happy light)—

not being merely safe from the Siren, but also unbound from the mast. And it is only in such generosity that any man becomes capable of so governing others as to take true part in any system of national economy. Nor is there any other eternal distinction between the upper and lower classes than this form of liberty, Eleutheria, or benignity, in the one, and its opposite of slavery, Douleia, or malignity, in the other; the separation of these two orders of men, and the firm government of the lower by the higher, being the first conditions of possible wealth and economy in any state,—the

Gods giving it no greater gift than the power to discern its freemen, and "malignum spernere vulgus."

The examination of this form of Charis must, therefore, lead us into the discussion of the principles of government in general, and especially of that of the poor by the rich, discovering how the Graciousness joined with the Greatness, or Love with Majestas, is the true Dei Gratia, or Divine Right, of every form and manner of King; *i.e.*, specifically, of the thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, and powers of the earth:—of the thrones, stable, or "ruling," literally right-doing powers ("rex eris, recte si facies:") of the dominations, lordly, edifying, dominant and harmonious powers; chiefly domestic, over the "built thing," domus, or house; and inherently twofold, Dominus and Domina; Lord and Lady: of the Princedoms, pre-eminent, incipient, creative, and demonstrative powers; thus poetic and mercantile, in the "princeps carmen deduxisse" and the merchant-prince: of the Virtues or Courages; militant, guiding, or Ducal powers: and finally of the Strengths or Forces pure; magistral powers, of the More over the less, and the forceful and free over the weak and servile elements of life.

IV

LAWS AND GOVERNMENTS: LABOUR AND RICHES

It remains, in order to complete the series of our definitions, that we examine the general conditions of government, and fix the sense in which we are to use, in future, the terms applied to them.

The government of a state consists in its customs, laws, and councils and their enforcements.

I. Customs.

As one person primarily differs from another by fineness of nature, and, secondarily, by fineness of training, so also,

a polite nation differs from a savage one, first by the refinement of its nature, and secondly by the delicacy of its customs.

In the completeness, or accomplishment of custom, which is the nation's self-government, there are three stages—first, fineness in method of doing or of being;—called the manner or moral of acts; secondly, firmness in holding such method after adoption, so that it shall become a habit in the character: *i.e.*, a constant "having" or "behaving," and, lastly, practice, or ethical power in performance and endurance, which is the skill following on habit, and the ease reached by frequency of right doing.

The sensibility of the nation is indicated by the fineness of its customs; its courage, patience, and temperance by its persistence in them.

By sensibility I mean its natural perception of beauty, fitness, and rightness; or of what is lovely, decent, and just: faculties dependent much on race, and the primal signs of fine breeding in man; but cultivable also by education, and necessarily perishing without it. True education has, indeed, no other function than the development of these faculties, and of the relative will. It has been the great error of modern intelligence to mistake science for education. You do not educate a man by telling him what he knew not, but by making him what he was not.

And making him what he will remain for ever: for no wash of weeds will bring back the faded purple. And in that dyeing there are two processes—first, the cleansing and wringing out, which is the baptism with water; and then the infusing of the blue and scarlet colours, gentleness and justice, which is the baptism with fire.

The customs and manners of a sensitive and highly-trained race are always Vital: that is to say, they are orderly manifestations of intense life (like the habitual action of the fingers of a musician). The customs and manners of a vile and rude race, on the contrary, are conditions of decay: they are not, properly speaking, habits, but incrustations; not re-

straints, or forms, of life; but gangrenes;—noisome, and the beginnings of death.

And generally so far as custom attaches itself to indolence instead of action, and to prejudice instead of perception, it takes this deadly character, so that thus

> Custom hangs upon us with a weight
> Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life.

This power and depth are, however, just what give value to custom, when it works with life, instead of against it.

The high ethical training of a nation being threefold, of body, heart, and practice, involves exquisiteness in all its perceptions of circumstance,—all its modes of act,—and all its occupations of thought. It implies perfect Grace, Pitifulness, and Peace; it is irreconcilably inconsistent with filthy or mechanical employments,—with the desire of money,—and with mental states of anxiety, jealousy, and indifference to pain. The present insensibility of the upper classes of Europe to the aspects of suffering, uncleanness, and crime, binds them not only into one responsibility with the sin, but into one dishonour with the foulness, which rot at their thresholds. The crimes daily recorded in the police courts of London and Paris (and much more those which are *un*recorded) are a disgrace to the whole body politic;[1] they are, as in the body natural, stains of disease on a face of delicate skin, making the delicacy itself frightful. Similarly, the filth and poverty permitted or ignored in the midst of us are as dishonourable to the whole social body, as in the body natural it is to wash the face, but leave the hands and feet foul. Christ's way is the only true one: begin at the feet; the face will take care of itself.

Yet, since necessarily, in the frame of a nation, nothing but the head can be of gold, and the feet, for the work they

[1] "The ordinary brute, who flourishes in the very centre of ornate life, tells us of unknown depths on the verge of which we totter, being bound to thank our stars every day we live that there is not a general outbreak, and a revolt from the yoke of civilization."—*Times* leader, Dec. 25, 1862. Admitting that our stars are to be thanked for our safety, whom are we to thank for the danger?

have to do, must be part of iron, part of clay;—foul or mechanical work is always reduced by a noble race to the minimum in quantity; and, even then, performed and endured, not without sense of degradation, as a fine temper is wounded by the sight of the lower offices of the body. The highest conditions of human society reached hitherto, have cast such work to slaves;—supposing slavery of a politically defined kind to be done away with, mechanical and foul employment must in all highly organized states take the aspect either of punishment or probation. All criminals should at once be set to the most dangerous and painful forms of it, especially to work in mines and at furnaces,[1] so as to relieve the innocent population as far as possible: of merely rough (not mechanical) manual labour, especially agricultural, a large portion should be done by the upper classes;—bodily health, and sufficient contrast and repose for the mental functions, being

[1] Our politicians, even the best of them, regard only the distress caused by the *failure* of mechanical labour. The degradation caused by its excess is a far more serious subject of thought, and of future fear. I shall examine this part of our subject at length hereafter. There can hardly be any doubt, at present, cast on the truth of the above passages, as all the great thinkers are unanimous on the matter. Plato's words are terrific in their scorn and pity whenever he touches on the mechanical arts. He calls the men employed in them not even human—but partially and diminutively human, and opposes such work to noble occupations, not merely as prison is opposed to freedom, but as a convict's dishonoured prison is to the temple; (escape from them being like that of a criminal to the sanctuary), and the destruction caused by them being of soul no less than body.—*Rep.* vi. 9. Compare *Laws* v. II. (Modern England, with all its pride of education, has lost that first sense of the word "school"; and till it recover that, it will find no other rightly.) His word for the harm to the soul is to "break" it, as we say of the heart.—*Econ.* I. 6. And herein also is the root of the scorn, otherwise apparently most strange and cruel, with which Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare always speak of the populace; for it is entirely true that in great states the lower orders are low by nature as well as by task, being precisely that part of the commonwealth which has been thrust down for its coarseness or unworthiness (by coarseness I mean especially insensibility and irreverence; the "profane" of Horace); and when this ceases to be so, and the corruption and profanity are in the higher instead of the lower orders, there arises, first, helpless confusion; then, if the lower classes deserve power, ensues swift revolution, and they get it: but if neither the populace nor their rulers deserve it, there follows mere darkness and dissolution, till, out of the putrid elements, some new capacity of order rises, like grass on a grave; if not, there is no more hope, nor shadow of turning, for that nation. Atropos has her way with it.

So that the law of national health is like that of a great lake or sea, in perfect but slow circulation, letting the dregs fall continually to the lowest place, and the clear water rise; yet so as that there shall be no neglect of the lower orders, but perfect supervision and sympathy, so that if one member suffer, all members shall suffer with it.

unattainable without it; what necessarily inferior labour remains to be done, as especially in manufacturers, should, and always will, when the relations of society are reverent and harmonious, fall to the lot of those who, for the time, are fit for nothing better. For as, whatever the perfectness of the educational system, there must remain infinite differences between the natures and capacities of men; and these differing natures are generally rangeable under the two qualities of lordly, (or tending towards rule, construction, and harmony), and servile (or tending towards misrule, destruction, and discord); and, since the lordly part is only in a state of profitableness while ruling, and the servile only in a state of redeemableness while serving, the whole health of the state depends on the manifest separation of these two elements of its mind: for, if the servile part be not separated and rendered visible in service, it mixes with and corrupts the entire body of the state; and if the lordly part be not distinguished, and set to rule, it is crushed and lost, being turned to no account, so that the rarest qualities of the nation are all given to it in vain. The effecting of which distinction is the first object, as we shall see presently, of national councils.

II. Laws.

These are the definitions and bonds of custom, or, of what the nation desires should become custom.

Law is either archic, (of direction), meristic, (of division), or critic, (of judgment). Archic law is that of appointment and precept: it defines what is and is not to be done. Meristic law is that of balance and distribution: it defines what is and is not to be possessed. Critic law is that of discernment and award: it defines what is and is not to be suffered.

If we choose to class the laws of precept and distribution under the general head of "statutes," all law is simply either of statute or judgment; that is, first the establishment of ordinance, and, secondly, the assignment of the reward or penalty due to its observance or violation.

To some extent these two forms of law must be associated, and, with every ordinance, the penalty of disobedience to it

be also determined. But since the degrees and guilt of disobedience vary, the determination of due reward and punishment must be modified by discernment of special fact, which is peculiarly the office of the judge, as distinguished from that of the lawgiver and law-sustainer, or king; not but that the two offices are always theoretically, and in early stages, or limited numbers, of society, are often practically, united in the same person or persons.

Also, it is necessary to keep clearly in view the distinction between these two kinds of law, because the possible range of law is wider in proportion to their separation. There are many points of conduct respecting which the nation may wisely express its will by a written precept or resolve; yet not enforce it by penalty; and the expedient degree of penalty is always quite a separate consideration from the expedience of the statute, for the statute may often be better enforced by mercy than severity, and is also easier in the bearing, and less likely to be abrogated. Farther, laws of precept have reference especially to youth, and concern themselves with training; but laws of judgment to manhood, and concern themselves with remedy and reward. There is a highly curious feeling in the English mind against educational law: we think no man's liberty should be interfered with till he has done irrevocable wrong; whereas it is then just too late for the only gracious and kingly interference, which is to hinder him from doing it. Make your educational laws strict, and your criminal ones may be gentle; but, leave youth its liberty, and you will have to dig dungeons for age. And it is good for a man that he wear the yoke in his youth: for the yoke of youth, if you know how to hold it, may be of silken thread; and there is sweet chime of silver bells at that bridle rein; but, for the captivity of age, you must forge the iron fetter, and cast the passing bell.

Since no law can be in a final or true sense established, but by right, (all unjust laws involving the ultimate necessity of their own abrogation,) the law-giving can only become a law-sustaining power in so far as it is Royal, or "right doing;"

—in so far, that is, as it rules, not mis-rules, and orders, not dis-orders, the things submitted to it. Throned on this rock of justice the kingly power becomes established and establishing; divine, and, therefore, it is literally true that no ruler can err, so long as he is a ruler (perverted by careless thought, which has cost the world somewhat, into "the king can do no wrong"). Which is a divine right of kings indeed, and quite unassailable, so long as the terms of it are "God and my Right," and not "Satan and my Wrong," which is apt, in some coinages, to appear on the reverse of the die, under a good lens.

Meristic law, or that of the tenure of property, first determines what every individual possesses by right, and secures it to him; and what he possesses by wrong, and deprives him of it. But it has a far higher provisory function: it determines what every man should possess, and puts it within his reach on due conditions; and what he should not possess, and puts this out of his reach conclusively.

Every article of human wealth has certain conditions attached to its merited possession, which, when they are unobserved, possession becomes rapine. The object of meristic law is not only to secure every man his rightful share (the share, that is, which he has worked for, produced, or received by gift from a rightful owner), but to enforce the due conditions of possession, as far as law may conveniently reach; for instance, that land shall not be wantonly allowed to run to waste, that streams shall not be poisoned by the persons through whose properties they pass, nor air be rendered unwholesome beyond given limits. Laws of this kind exist already in rudimentary degree, but needing large development: the just laws respecting the possession of works of art have not hitherto been so much as conceived, and the daily loss of national wealth, and of its use, in this respect, is quite incalculable.[1] While, finally, in certain conditions of a nation's

[1] These laws need revision quite as much respecting property in national as in private hands. For instance: the public under a vague impression, that because they have paid for the contents of the British Museum, every one has an equal right to see and to handle them. But the public have similarly paid

progress, laws limiting accumulation of property may be found expedient.

Critic law determines questions of injury, and assigns due rewards and punishments to conduct.[1]

Therefore, in order to make a true analysis of it, we must understand the real meaning of this word "injury."

We commonly understand by it any kind of harm done by one man to another; but we do not define the idea of harm: sometimes we limit it to the harm which the sufferer is conscious of, whereas much the worst injuries are those he is unconscious of; and, at other times, we limit the idea to violence, or restraint, whereas much the worse forms of injury are to be accomplished by carelessness, and the withdrawal of restraint.

"Injury" is then simply the refusal, or violation, of any

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for the contents of Woolwich arsenal; yet do not expect free access to it, or handling of its contents. The British Museum is neither a free circulating library, nor a free school: it is a place for the safe preservation, and exhibition on due occasion, of unique books, unique objects of natural history, and unique works of art; its books can no more be used by everybody than its coins can be handled, or its statues cast. Free libraries there ought to be in every quarter of London, with large and complete reading-rooms attached; so also free educational institutions should be open in every quarter of London, all day long and till late at night, well lighted, well catalogued, and rich in contents both of art and natural history. But neither the British Museum nor National Gallery are schools; they are treasuries; and both should be severely restricted in access and in use. Unless some order is taken, and that soon, in the MSS. department of the Museum (Sir Frederic Madden was complaining of this to me only the other day), the best MSS. in the collection will be destroyed, irretrievably, by the careless and continual handling to which they are now subjected.

[1] Two curious economical questions arise laterally with respect to this branch of law, namely, the cost of crime, and the cost of judgment. The cost of crime is endured by nations ignorantly, not being clearly stated in their budgets; the cost of judgment patiently, (provided only it can be had pure for the money), because the science, or perhaps we ought rather to say the art, of law, is felt to found a noble profession, and discipline; so that civilized nations are usually glad that a number of persons should be supported by funds devoted to disputation and analysis. But it has not yet been calculated what the practical value might have been, in other directions, of the intelligence now occupied in deciding, through courses of years, what might have been decided as justly, had the date of judgment been fixed, in as many hours. Imagine one half of the funds which any great nation devotes to dispute by law, applied to the determination of physical questions in medicine, agriculture, and theoretic science; and calculate the probable results within the next ten years.

I say nothing yet, of the more deadly, more lamentable loss, involved in the use of purchased instead of personal justice.

man's right or claim upon his fellows: which claim, much talked of in modern times, under the term "right," is mainly resolvable into two branches: a man's claim not to be hindered from doing what he should; and his claim to be hindered from doing what he should not; these two forms of hindrance being intensified by reward, or help and fortune, or Fors, on one side, and punishment, impediment, and even final arrest or Mors, on the other.

Now, in order to a man's obtaining these two rights, it is clearly needful that the *worth* of him should be approximately known; as well as the *want* of worth, which has, unhappily, been usually the principal subject of study for critic law, careful hitherto only to mark degrees of de-merit, instead of merit;—assigning, indeed, to the deficiencies (not always, alas! even to these) just fine, diminution, or (with the broad vowels) damnation; but to the efficiencies, on the other side, which are by much the more interesting, as well as the only profitable part of its subject, assigning in any clear way neither measurement nor aid.

Now, it is in this higher and perfect function of critic law, enabling as well as disabling, that it becomes truly kingly or basilican, instead of Draconic: (what Providence gave the great, old, wrathful legislator his name?): that is, it becomes the law of man and of life, instead of the law of the worm and of death—both of these laws being set in everlasting poise one against another, and the enforcement of both being the eternal function of the lawgiver, and true claim of every living soul: such claim being indeed as straight and earnest to be mercifully hindered, and even, if need be, abolished, when longer existence means only deeper destruction, as to be mercifully helped and recreated when longer existence and new creation mean nobler life. So that what we vulgarly term reward and punishment will be found to resolve themselves mainly into help and hindrance, and these again will issue naturally from true recognition of deserving, and the just reverence and just wrath which follow instinctively on such recognition.

I say, "follow," but in reality they *are* the recognition. Reverence is but the perceiving of the thing in its entire truth: truth reverted is truth revered (vereor and veritas having clearly the same root), so that Goethe is for once, and for a wonder, wrong in that part of the noble scheme of education in Wilhelm Meister, in which he says that reverence is not innate, and must be taught. Reverence is as instinctive as anger;—both of them instant on true vision: it is sight and understanding that we have to teach, and these *are* reverence. Make a man perceive worth and in its reflection he sees his own relative unworth, and worships thereupon inevitably, not with stiff courtesy, but rejoicingly, passionately, and, best of all, *restfully:* for the inner capacity of awe and love is infinite in man; and when his eyes are once opened to the sight of beauty and honour, it is with him as with a lover, who, falling at his mistress's feet, would cast himself through the earth, if it might be, to fall lower, and find a deeper and humbler place. And the common insolences and petulances of the people, and their talk of equality, are not irreverence in them in the least, but mere blindness, stupefaction, and fog in the brains,[1] which pass away in the degree that they are raised and purified: the first sign of which raising is, that they gain some power of discerning, and some patience in submitting to their true counsellors and governors; the modes of such discernment forming the real "constitution" of the state, and not the titles or offices of the discerned person; for it is no matter, save in degree of mischief, to what office a man is appointed, if he cannot fulfil it. And this brings us to the third division of our subject.

III. Government by Council.

This is the determination, by living authority, of the national conduct to be observed under existing circumstances; and the modification or enlargement, abrogation or enforce-

[1] Compare Chaucer's "villany" (clownishness).

"Full foul and chorlishe seemed she,
And eke villanous for to be,
And little coulde of norture
To worship any creature."

ment, of the code of national law according to present needs or purposes. This government is necessarily always by council, for though the authority of it may be vested in one person, that person cannot form any opinion on a matter of public interest but by (voluntarily or involuntarily) submitting himself to the influence of others.

This government is always twofold—visible and invisible.

The visible government is that which nominally carries on the national business; determines its foreign relations, raises taxes, levies soldiers, fights battles, or directs that they be fought, and otherwise becomes the exponent of the national fortune. The invisible government is that exercised by all energetic and intelligent men, each in his sphere, regulating the inner will and secret ways of the people, essentially forming its character, and preparing its fate.

Visible governments are the toys of some nations, the diseases of others, the harness of some, the burdens of more, the necessity of all. Sometimes their career is quite distinct from that of the people, and to write it, as the national history, is as if one should number the accidents which befall a man's weapons and wardrobe, and call the list his biography. Nevertheless, a truly noble and wise nation necessarily has a noble and wise visible government, for its wisdom issues in that conclusively. "Not out of the oak, nor out of the rock, but out of the temper of man, is his polity;" where the temper inclines, it inclines as Samson by his pillar, and draws all down with it.

Visible governments are, in their agencies, capable of three pure forms, and of no more than three.

They are either monarchies, where the authority is vested in one person; oligarchies, when it is vested in a minority; or democracies, when vested in a majority.

But these three forms are not only, in practice, variously limited and combined, but capable of infinite difference in character and use, receiving specific names according to their variations; which names, being nowise agreed upon, nor consistently used, either in thought or writing, no man can at

present tell, in speaking of any kind of government, whether he is understood, nor in hearing whether he understands. Thus we usually call a just government by one person a monarchy, and an unjust or cruel one, a tyranny; this might be reasonable if it had reference to the divinity of true government; but to limit the term "oligarchy" to government by a few rich people, and to call government by a few wise or noble people "aristocracies," is evidently absurd, unless it were proved that rich people never could be wise, or noble people rich; and farther absurd because there are other distinctions in character, as well as riches or wisdom (greater purity of race, or strength of purpose, for instance), which may give the power of government to the few. So that if we had to give names to every group or kind of minority, we should have verbiage enough. But there is but one right name—"oligarchy."

So also the terms "republic" and "democracy" are confused, especially in modern use; and both of them are liable to every sort of misconception. A republic means, properly, a polity in which the state, with its all, is at every man's service, and every man, with his all, at the state's service—(people are apt to lose sight of the last condition), but its government may nevertheless be oligarchic (consular, or decemviral, for instance), or monarchic (dictatorial). But a democracy means a state in which the government rests directly with the majority of the citizens. And both these conditions have been judged only by such accidents and aspects of them as each of us has had experience of; and sometimes both have been confused with anarchy, as it is the fashion at present to talk of the "failure of republican institutions in America," when there has never yet been in America any such thing as an institution, but only defiance of institution; neither any such thing as a *res-publica,* but only a multitudinous *res-privata;* every man for himself. It is not republicanism which fails now in America; it is your model science of political economy, brought to its perfect practice. There you may see competition, and the "law of

demand and supply" (especially in paper), in beautiful and unhindered operation.[1] Lust of wealth, and trust in it; vulgar faith in magnitude and multitude, instead of nobleness; besides that faith natural to back-woodsmen,—"lucum ligna," —perpetual self-contemplation, issuing in passionate vanity; total ignorance of the finer and higher arts, and of all that they teach and bestow;[2] and the discontent of energetic minds unoccupied, frantic with hope of uncomprehended change, and progress they know not whither;[3]—these are the things that have "failed" in America; and yet not altogether failed —it is not collapse, but collision; the greatest railroad accident on record, with fire caught from the furnace, and Catiline's quenching "non aquâ, sed ruinâ." But I see not, in any of our talk of them, justice enough done to their erratic strength of purpose, nor any estimate taken of the strength of endurance of domestic sorrow, in what their women and children suppose a righteous cause. And out of that endurance and suffering, its own fruit will be born with time; and Carlyle's prophecy of them (June, 1850), as it has now come true in the first clause, will in the last.

America, too, will find that caucuses, division-lists, stump-oratory, and speeches to Buncombe will not carry men to the immortal gods; that the Washington Congress, and constitutional battle of Kilkenny cats is there, as here, naught for such objects; quite incompetent for such; and, in fine, that said sublime constitutional arrangement will require to be (with terrible throes, and travail such as few expect yet) remodelled, abridged, extended, suppressed; torn asunder, put together again;—not without heroic labour, and effort quite other than that of the stump-orator and the revival preacher, one day.

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[1] Supply and demand! Alas; for what noble work was there ever any audible "demand" in that poor sense (Past and Present). Nay, the demand is not loud even for ignoble work. See "Average earnings of Betty Taylor," in *Times* of 4th February of this year: "Worked from Monday morning at 8 A.M., to Friday night at 5.30 P.M. for 1*s.* 5½*d.*—*Laissez faire.*

[2] See Bacon's note in the *Advancement of Learning*, on "didicisse fideliter artes" ("but indeed the accent had need be upon 'fideliter'). It taketh away vain admiration of anything, which is the root of all weakness; for all things are admired either because they are new, or because they are great," &c.

[3] Ames, by report of Waldo Emerson, expressed the popular security wisely, saying "that a monarchy is a merchantman, which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock, and go to the bottom; whilst a republic is a raft, which would never sink, but then your feet are always in the water." Yes, and when the four winds (your only pilots) steer competitively from the four corners, perhaps the wiser mariner may wish for keel and wheel again.

Understand, then, once for all, that no form of government, provided it be a government at all, is, as such, either to be condemned or praised, or contested for in anywise but by fools. But all forms of government are good just so far as they attain this one vital necessity of policy—that the wise and kind, few or many, shall govern the unwise and unkind; and they are evil so far as they miss of this, or reverse it. Nor does the form in any case signify one whit, but its *firmness*, and adaptation to the need; for if there be many foolish persons in a state, and few wise, then it is good that the few govern; and if there be many wise and few foolish, then it is good that the many govern; and if many be wise, yet one wiser, then it is good that one should govern; and so on. Thus, we may have "the ant's republic, and the realm of bees," both good in their kind; one for groping, and the other for building; and nobler still, for flying, the Ducal monarchy of those

> Intelligent of seasons, that set forth
> The aery caravan, high over seas.

Nor need we want examples, among the inferior creatures, of dissoluteness, as well as resoluteness, in government. I once saw democracy finely illustrated by the beetles of North Switzerland, who by universal suffrage, and elytric acclamation, one May twilight, carried it that they would fly over the Lake of Zug; and flew short, to the great disfigurement of the Lake of Zug, over some leagues square, and to the close of the cockchafer democracy for that year. The old fable of the frogs and the stork finely touches one form of tyranny; but truth will touch it more nearly than fable, for tyranny is not complete when it is only over the idle, but when it is over the laborious and the blind. This description of pelicans and climbing perch, which I find quoted in one of our popular natural histories, out of Sir Emerson Tennant's *Ceylon*, comes as near as may be to the true image of the thing:—

> Heavy rains came on, and as we stood on the high ground, we observed a pelican on the margin of the shallow pool gorging himself; our people went towards him, and raised a cry of "Fish! fish!" We hurried down, and found numbers of fish struggling upward through the grass, in the rills formed by

the trickling of the rain. There was scarcely water to cover them, but nevertheless they made rapid progress up the bank, on which our followers collected about two baskets of them. They were forcing their way up the knoll, and had they not been interrupted, first by the pelican, and afterwards by ourselves, they would in a few minutes have gained the highest point, and descended on the other side into a pool which formed another portion of the tank. In going this distance, however, they must have used muscular exertion enough to have taken them half a mile on level ground; for at these places all the cattle and wild animals of the neighborhood had latterly come to drink, so that the surface was everywhere indented with footmarks, in addition to the cracks in the surrounding baked mud, into which the fish tumbled in their progress. In those holes which were deep, and the sides perpendicular, they remained to die, and were carried off by kites and crows.

But whether governments be bad or good, one general disadvantage seems to attach to them in modern times—that they are all costly. This, however, is not essentially the fault of the governments. If nations choose to play at war, they will always find their governments willing to lead the game, and soon coming under that term of Aristophanes, "shield-sellers." And when the shields take the form of iron ships, with apparatus "for defence against liquid fire,"—as I see by latest accounts they are now arranging the decks in English dockyards,—they become costly biers enough for the grey convoy of chief-mourner waves, wreathed with funereal foam, to bear back the dead upon; the massy shoulders of those corpse-bearers being intended for quite other work, and to bear the living, and food for the living, if we would let them.

Nor have we the least right to complain of our governments being expensive, so long as we set the government to do precisely the work which brings no return. If our present doctrines of political economy be just, let us trust them to the utmost; take that war business out of the government's hands, and test therein the principles of supply and demand. Let our future sieges of Sebastopol be done by contract—no capture, no pay—(I am prepared to admit that things might sometimes go better so); and let us sell the commands of our prospective battles, with our vicarages, to the lowest bidder; so may we have cheap victories and divinity. On the other hand, if we have so much suspicion of our science that we dare not trust it on military or spiritual business, it would be but reasonable to try whether some authoritative handling

may not prosper in matters utilitarian. If we were to set our governments to do useful things instead of mischievous, possibly even the apparatus might in time come to be less costly! The machine, applied to the building of the house, might perhaps pay, when it seems not to pay, applied to pulling it down. If we made in our dockyards ships to carry timber and coals, instead of cannon, and with provision for the brightening of domestic solid culinary fire, instead of for the averting of hostile liquid fire, it might have some effect on the taxes? Or if the iron bottoms were to bring us home nothing better than ivory and peacocks, instead of martial glory we might at least have gayer suppers, and doors of the right material for dreams after them. Or suppose that we tried the experiment on land instead of water carriage; already the government, not unapproved, carries letters and parcels for us; larger packages may in time follow;—parcels; —even general merchandise? why not, at last, ourselves? Had the money spent in local mistakes and vain private litigation, on the railroads of England, been laid out, instead, under proper government restraint, on really useful railroad work, and had no absurd expense been incurred in ornamenting stations, we might already have had,—what ultimately it will be found we must have,—quadruple rails, two for passengers, and two for traffic, on every great line; and we might have been carried in swift safety, and watched and warded by well-paid pointsmen, for half the present fares.

Suppose it should turn out, finally, that a true government set to true work, instead of being a costly engine, was a paying one? that your government, rightly organized, instead of itself subsisting by an income tax, would produce its subjects some subsistence in the shape of an income dividend!—police and judges duly paid besides, only with less work than the state at present provides for them.

A true government set to true work!—Not easily imagined, still less obtained, but not beyond human hope or ingenuity. Only you will have to alter your election systems somewhat, first. Not by universal suffrage, nor by votes purchaseable

with beer, is such government to be had. That is to say, not by universal *equal* suffrage. Every man upwards of twenty, who had been convicted of no legal crime, should have his say in this matter; but afterwards a louder voice, as he grows older, and approves himself wiser. If he has one vote at twenty, he should have two at thirty, four at forty, ten at fifty. For every one vote which he has with an income of a hundred a year, he should have ten with an income of a thousand, (provided you first see to it that wealth is, as nature intended it to be, the reward of sagacity and industry,—not of good luck in a scramble or a lottery). For every one vote which he had as subordinate in any business, he should have two when he became a master; and every office and authority nationally bestowed inferring trustworthiness and intellect, should have its known proportional number of votes attached to it. But into the detail and working of a true system in these matters we cannot now enter; we are concerned as yet with definitions only, and statements of first principles, which will be established now sufficiently for our purposes when we have examined the nature of that form of government last on the list in the previous paper,—the purely "Magistral," exciting at present its full share of public notice, under its ambiguous title of "slavery."

I have not, however, been able to ascertain in definite terms, from the declaimers against slavery, what they understand by it. If they mean only the imprisonment or compulsion of one person by another, such imprisonment or compulsion being in many cases highly expedient, slavery, so defined, would be no evil in itself, but only in its abuse; that is, when men are slaves, who should not be, or masters, who should not be, or under conditions which should not be. It is not, for instance, a necessary condition of slavery, nor a desirable one, that parents should be separated from children, or husbands from wives; but the institution of war, against which people declaim with less violence, effects such separations,—not unfrequently in a highly permanent manner. To press a sailor, seize a white youth by conscription for a soldier,

or carry off a black one for a labourer, may all be right, or all wrong, according to needs and circumstances. It is wrong to scourge a man unnecessarily. So it is to shoot him. Both must be done on occasion; and it is better and kinder to flog a man to his work, than to leave him idle till he robs, and flog him afterwards. The essential thing for all creatures is to be made to do right; how they are made to do it—by pleasant promises, or hard necessities, pathetic oratory, or the whip, is comparatively immaterial. To be deceived is perhaps as incompatible with human dignity as to be whipped, and I suspect the last instrument to be not the worst, for the help of many individuals. The Jewish nation throve under it, in the hand of a monarch reputed not unwise; it is only the change of whip for scorpion which is inexpedient; and yet that change is as likely to come to pass on the side of licence as of law; for the true scorpion whips are those of the nation's pleasant vices; which are to it as St. John's locusts —crown on the head, ravin in the mouth, and sting in the tail. If it will not bear the rule of Athena and her brother, who shepherd without smiting, Athena at last calls no more in the corners of the streets; and then follows the rule of Tisiphone, who smites without shepherding.

If, however, by slavery, instead of absolute compulsion, is meant the purchase, by money, of the right of compulsion, such purchase is necessarily made whenever a portion of any territory is transferred, for money, from one monarch to another: which has happened frequently enough in history, without its being supposed that the inhabitants of the districts so transferred became therefore slaves. In this, as in the former case, the dispute seems about the fashion of the thing, rather than the fact of it. There are two rocks in mid-sea, on each of which, neglected equally by instructive and commercial powers, a handful of inhabitants live as they may. Two merchants bid for the two properties, but not in the same terms. One bids for the people, buys *them*, and sets them to work, under pain of scourge; the other bids for the rock, buys *it*, and throws the inhabitants into the sea.

The former is the American, the latter the English method, of slavery; much is to be said for, and something against, both, which I hope to say in due time and place.

If, however, slavery means not merely the purchase of the right of compulsion, but the purchase of the body and soul of the creature itself for money, it is not, I think, among the black races that purchases of this kind are most extensively made, or that separate souls of a fine make fetch the highest price. This branch of the inquiry we shall have occasion also to follow out at some length.

The fact is that slavery is not a political institution at all, but an inherent, natural, and eternal inheritance of a large portion of the human race—to whom, the more you give of their own will, the more slaves they will make themselves. In common parlance, we idly confuse captivity with slavery, and are always thinking of the difference between pine-trunks and cowslip-bells, or between carrying wood and clothes-stealing, instead of noting the far more serious differences between Ariel and Caliban, and the means by which practically that difference may be brought about. I should dwell, even in these prefatory papers, at somewhat more length on this matter, had not all I would say, been said already in vain (not, as I hope, ultimately in vain), by Carlyle, in the first of the *Latter-day Pamphlets*, which I commend to the reader's gravest reading; together with that as much neglected, and still more immediately needed, on model prisons, and with the great chapter on "Permanence," (fifth of the last section of "Past and Present,") which sums what is known, and foreshadows,—or rather fore-lights, all that is to be learned, of National Discipline. I have only here farther to examine the nature of one world-wide and everlasting form of slavery, wholesome in use, as deadly in abuse—the service of the rich by the poor.

As in all previous discussions of our subject, we must study this relation in its simplest elements, in order to reach its first principles.

The simplest state of it is, then, this:[1] a wise and provident person works much, consumes little, and lays by store; an improvident person works little, consumes all the produce, and lays by no store. Accident interrupts the daily work, or renders it less productive; the idle person must then starve, or be supported by the provident one,—who, having him thus at his mercy, may either refuse to maintain him altogether, or, which will evidently be more to his own interest, say to him, "I will maintain you, indeed, but you shall now work hard, instead of indolently, and instead of being allowed to lay by what you save, as you might have done, had you remained independent, *I* will take all the surplus. You would not lay it up for yourself; it is wholly your own fault that has thrown you into my power, and I will force you to work, or starve; yet you shall have no profit, only your daily bread." This mode of treatment has now become so universal that it is supposed the only natural—nay, the only possible one; and the market wages are calmly defined by economists as "the sum which will maintain the labourer."

The power of the provident person to do this is only checked by the correlative power of some neighbour of similarly frugal habits, who says to the labourer—"I will give you a little more than my provident friend:—come and work for me."

The power of the provident over the improvident depends thus primarily on their relative numbers; secondarily, on the modes of agreement of the adverse parties with each other. The level of wages is a variable function of the number of provident and idle persons in the world, of the enmity between them as classes, and of the agreement between those of the same class. It depends, from beginning to end, on moral conditions.

Supposing the rich to be entirely selfish, it is always for their interest that the poor should be as numerous as they can

[1] In the present general examination I concede so much to ordinary economists as to ignore all innocent poverty. I assume poverty to be always criminal, the conceivable exceptions we will examine afterwards.

employ and restrain. For, granting the entire population no larger than the ground can easily maintain,—that the classes are stringently divided,—and that there is sense or strength of hand enough with the rich to secure obedience; then, if nine-tenths of a nation are poor, the remaining tenth have the service of nine persons each;[1] but, if eight-tenths are poor, only of four each; if seven-tenths are poor, of two and a third each; if six-tenths are poor, of one and a half each; and, if five-tenths are poor, of only one each; but, practically, if the rich strive always to obtain more power over the poor, instead of to raise them,—and if, on the other hand, the poor become continually more vicious and numerous, through neglect and oppression,—though the range of the power of the rich increases, its tenure becomes less secure; until, at last, the measure of iniquity being full, revolution, civil war, or the state to a healthier or stronger one, closes the moral corruption and industrial disease.

It is rare, however, that things come to this extremity. Kind persons among the rich, and wise among the poor, modify the connexion of the classes: the efforts made to raise and relieve on the one side, and the success of honest toil on the other, bind and blend the orders of society into the confused tissue of half-felt obligation, sullenly-rendered obedience, and variously-directed, or misdirected, toil, which form the warp of daily life. But this great law rules all the wild design of the weaving; that success (while society is guided by laws of competition) signifies always so much victory over your neighbour as to obtain the direction of his work, and to take the profits of it. This is the real source of all great riches. No man can become largely rich by his personal toil.[2] The work of his own hands, wisely directed, will in-

[1] I say nothing yet of the quality of the servants, which, nevertheless, is the gist of the business. Will you have Paul Veronese to paint your ceiling, or the plumber from over the way? Both will work for the same money; Paul, if anything, a little the cheaper of the two, if you keep him in good humor; only you have to discern him first, which will need eyes.

[2] By his art he may; but only when its produce, or the sight or hearing of it, becomes a subject of dispute, so as to enable the artist to tax the labour of multitudes highly, in exchange for his own.

deed always maintain himself and his family, and make fitting provision for his age. But it is only by the discovery of some method of taxing the labour of others that he can become opulent. Every increase of his capital enables him to extend this taxation more widely; that is, to invest larger funds in the maintenance of labourers,—to direct, accordingly, vaster and yet vaster masses of labour, and to appropriate its profits. There is much confusion of idea on the subject of this appropriation. It is, of course, the interest of the employer to disguise it from the persons employed; and for his own comfort and complacency he often desires no less to disguise it from himself. And it is matter of much doubt with me, how far the foolish arguments used habitually on this subject are indeed the honest expressions of foolish convictions,—or rather (as I am sometimes forced to conclude, from the irritation with which they are advanced) are resolutely dishonest, wilful, sophisms, arranged so as to mask to the last moment the real state of economy, and future duties of men. By taking a simple example, and working it thoroughly out, the subject may be rescued from all but determined misconception.

Let us imagine a society of peasants, living on a river-shore, exposed to destructive inundation at somewhat extended intervals; and that each peasant possesses of this good, but imperilled ground, more than he needs to cultivate for immediate subsistence. We will assume farther (and with too great probability of justice), that the greater part of them indolently keep in tillage just as much land as supplies them with daily food;—that they leave their children idle and untaught; and take no precautions against the rise of the stream. But one of them (we will say only one, for the sake of greater clearness) cultivates carefully all the ground of his estate; makes his children work hard and healthily; uses his spare time and theirs in building a rampart against the river; and at the end of some years has in his storehouses large reserves of food and clothing, and in his stables a well-tended breed of cattle.

The torrent rises at last—sweeps away the harvests and many of the cottages of the careless peasantry, and leaves them destitute. They naturally come for help to the provident one, whose fields are unwasted, and whose granaries are full. He has the right to refuse it them: no one disputes this right. But he will probably not refuse it; it is not his interest to do so, even were he entirely selfish and cruel. The only question with him will be on what terms his aid is to be granted.

Clearly, not on terms of mere charity. To maintain his neighbours in idleness would be his ruin and theirs. He will require work from them, in exchange for their maintenance; and, whether in kindness or cruelty, all the work they can give. Not now the three or four hours they were wont to spend on their own land, but the eight or ten hours they ought to have spent. But how will he apply this labour? The men are now his slaves—nothing less. On pain of starvation, he can force them to work in the manner, and to the end he chooses. And it is by his wisdom in this choice that the worthiness of his mastership is proved, or its unworthiness. Evidently, he must first set them to bank out the water in some temporary way, and to get their ground cleansed and resown; else, in any case, their continued maintenance will be impossible. That done, and while he has still to feed them, suppose he makes them raise a secure rampart for their own ground against all future flood, and rebuild their houses in safer places, with the best material they can find; being allowed time out of their working hours to fetch such material from a distance. And for the food and clothing advanced, he takes security in land that as much shall be returned at a convenient period.

At the end of a few years, we may conceive this security redeemed, and the debt paid. The prudent peasant has sustained no loss; but is no richer than he was, and has had all his trouble for nothing. But he has enriched his neighbours materially; bettered their houses, secured their land, and rendered them, in worldly matters, equal to himself. In all true

and final sense, he has been throughout their lord and king.

We will next trace his probable line of conduct, presuming his object to be exclusively the increase of his own fortune. After roughly recovering and cleansing the ground, he allows the ruined peasantry only to build huts upon it, such as he thinks protective enough from the weather to keep them in working health. The rest of their time he occupies first in pulling down and rebuilding on a magnificent scale his own house, and in adding large dependencies to it. This done, he follows the example of the first great Hebrew financier, and in exchange for his continued supply of corn, buys as much of his neighbours' land, as he thinks he can superintend the management of; and makes the former owners securely embank and protect the ceded portion. By this arrangement, he leaves to a certain number of the peasantry only as much ground as will just maintain them in their existing numbers: as the population increases, he takes the extra hands, who cannot be maintained on the narrowed estates, for his own servants; employs some to cultivate the ground he has bought, giving them of its produce merely enough for subsistence; with the surplus, which, under his energetic and careful superintendence, will be large, he supports a train of servants for state, and a body of workmen, whom he educates in ornamental arts. He now can splendidly decorate his house, lay out its ground magnificently, and richly supply his table, and that of his household and retinue. And thus, without any abuse of right, we should find established all the phenomena of poverty and riches, which (it is supposed necessarily) accompany modern civilization. In one part of the district, we should have unhealthy land, miserable dwellings, and half-starved poor; in another, a well-ordered estate, well-fed servants, and refined conditions of highly-educated and luxurious life.

I have put the two cases in simplicity, and to some extremity. But though in more complex and qualified operation, all the relations of society are but the expansion of these two typical sequences of conduct and result. I do not say,

observe, that the first procedure is entirely right; still less, that the second is wholly wrong. Servants, and artists, and splendour of habitation and retinue, have all their use, propriety, and office. I only wish the reader to understand clearly what they cost; that the condition of having them is the subjection to you of a certain number of imprudent or unfortunate persons (or, it may be, more fortunate than their master), over whose destinies you exercise a boundless control. "Riches" mean eternally and essentially this; and may heaven send at last a time when those words of our best-reputed economist shall be true, and we shall indeed "all know what it is to be rich;" that it is to be slave-master over farthest earth, and over all ways and thoughts of men. Every operative you employ is your true servant: distant or near, subject to your immediate orders, or ministering to your widely-communicated caprice,—for the pay he stipulates, or the price he tempts,—all are alike under this great dominion of the gold. The milliner who makes the dress is as much a servant (more so, in that she uses more intelligence in the service) as the maid who puts it on; the carpenter who smooths the door, as the footman who opens it; the tradesmen who supply the table, as the labourers and sailors who supply the tradesmen. Why speak of these lower services? Painters and singers, (whether of note or rhyme,) jesters and story-tellers, moralists, historians, priests—so far as these, in any degree, paint, or sing, or tell their tale, or charm their charm, or "perform" their rite, for pay,—in so far they are all slaves; abject utterly, if the service be for pay only; abject less and less in proportion to the degrees of love and of wisdom which enter into their duty, or can enter into it, according as their function is to do the bidding and the work of a man;—or to amuse, tempt, and deceive a child.

There may be thus, and, to a certain extent, there always is, a government of the rich by the poor, as of the poor by the rich; but the latter is the prevailing and necessary one, and it consists, observe, of two distinct functions—the collection of the profits of labour from those who would have

misused them, and the administration of those profits for the service either of the same person in future, or of others; or, as is more frequently the case in modern times, for the service of the collector himself.

The examination of these various modes of collection and use of riches will form the third branch of our future inquiries; but the key to the whole subject lies in the clear understanding of the difference between selfish and unselfish expenditure. It is not easy, by any course of reasoning, to enforce this on the generally unwilling hearer; yet the definition of unselfish expenditure is brief and simple. It is expenditure which, if you are a capitalist, does not pay you, but pays somebody else; and if you are a consumer, does not please you, but pleases somebody else. Take one special instance, in further illustration of the general type given above. I did not invent that type, but spoke of a real river, and of real peasantry, the languid and sickly race which inhabits, or haunts—for they are often more like spectres than living men—the thorny desolation of the banks of the Arve. Some years ago, a society formed at Geneva offered to embank the river for the ground which would have been recovered by the operation; but the offer was refused by the (then Sardinian) government. The capitalists saw that this expenditure would have "paid," if the ground saved from the river was to be theirs. But if, when the offer that had this aspect of profit was refused, they had nevertheless persisted in the plan, and merely taking security for the return of their outlay, lent the funds for the work, and thus saved a whole race of human souls from perishing in a pestiferous fen (as, I presume, some among them would, at personal risk, have dragged any one drowning creature out of the current of the stream, and not expected payment therefor), such expenditure would have precisely corresponded to the use of his power made in the first instance, by our supposed richer peasant—it would have been the king's, of grace, instead of the usurer's, for gain.

"Impossible, absurd, utopian!" exclaim nine-tenths of the few readers whom these words may find.

No, good reader, *this* is not utopian: but I will tell you what would have seemed, if we had not seen it, utopian on the side of evil instead of good; that ever men should have come to value their money so much more than their lives, that if you call upon them to become soldiers, and take chance of bullet, for their pride's sake, they will do it gaily, without thinking twice; but if you ask them, for their country's sake, to spend a hundred pounds without security of getting back a hundred-and-five,[1] they will laugh in your face.

Not but that also this game of life-giving and taking is in the end, somewhat more costly than other forms of play might be. Rifle practice is, indeed, a not unhealthy pastime, and a feather on the top of the head is a pleasing appendage; but while learning the stops and fingering of the sweet instrument, does no one ever calculate the cost of an overture? What melody does Tityrus meditate on his tenderly spiral pipe? The leaden seed of it, broad cast, true conical "Dents de Lion" seed—needing less allowance for the wind than is usual with that kind of herb—what crop are you likely to have of it? Suppose, instead of this volunteer marching and countermarching, you were to do a little volunteer ploughing and counterploughing? It is more difficult to do it straight: the dust of the earth, so disturbed, is more grateful than for merely rhythmic footsteps. Golden cups, also, given

[1] I have not hitherto touched on the subject of interest of money; it is too complex; and must be reserved for its proper place in the body of the work. (I should be glad if a writer, who sent me some valuable notes on this subject, and asked me to return a letter which I still keep at his service, would send me his address.) The definition of interest (apart from compensation for risk) is, "the exponent of the comfort of accomplished labour, separated from its power;" the power being what is lent: and the French economists who have maintained the entire illegality of interest are wrong; yet by no means so curiously or wildly wrong as the English and French ones opposed to them, whose opinions have been collected by Dr. Whewell at page 41 of his *Lectures;* it never seeming to occur to the mind of the compiler, any more than to the writers whom he quotes, that it is quite possible, and even (according to Jewish proverb) prudent, for men to hoard, as ants and mice do, for use, not usury; and lay by something for winter nights, in the expectation of rather sharing than lending the scrapings. My Savoyard squirrels would pass a pleasant time of it under the snow-laden pine-branches, if they always declined to economize because no one would pay them interest on nuts.

for good ploughing, would be more suitable in colour: (ruby glass, for the wine which "giveth his color" on the ground, as well as in the cup, might be fitter for the rifle prize in ladies' hands); or, conceive a little volunteer exercise with the spade, other than such as is needed for moat and breast-work, or even for the burial of the fruit of the leaden avena-seed, subject to the shrill Lemures' criticism—

Wer hat das Haus so schlecht gebaut?

If you were to embank Lincolnshire now—more stoutly against the sea? or strip the peat of Solway, or plant Plinlimmon moors with larch—then, in due hour of year, some amateur reaping and threshing?

"Nay, we reap and thresh by steam, in these advanced days."

I know it, my wise and economical friends. The stout arms God gave you to win your bread by, you would fain shoot your neighbours,—and God's sweet singers with; then you invoke the fiends to your farm-service; and—

When young and old come forth to play
On a sulphurous holiday,
Tell how the darkling goblin sweat
(His feast of cinders duly set),
And, belching night, where breathed the morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end.

But we will press the example closer. On a green knoll above that plain of the Arve, between Cluse and Bonneville, there was, in the year 1860, a cottage inhabited by a well-doing family—man and wife, three children, and the grandmother. I call it a cottage, but in truth, it was a large chimney on the ground, wide at the bottom, (so that the family might live round the fire), with one broken window in it, and an unclosing door. The family, I say, was "well-doing," at least, it was hopeful and cheerful; the wife healthy, the children, for Savoyards, pretty and active, but the husband threatened with decline, from exposure under the cliffs of

the Mont Vergi by day, and to draughts between every plank of his chimney in the frosty nights.

"Why could he not plaster the chinks?" asks the practical reader. For the same reason that your child cannot wash its face and hands till you have washed them many a day for it, and will not wash them when it can, till you force it.

I passed this cottage often in my walks, had its window and door mended, sometimes mended also a little the meal of sour bread and broth, and generally got kind greeting and smile from the face of young or old; which greeting, this year, narrowed itself into the half-recognizing stare of the elder child, and the old woman's tears; for the father and mother were both dead,—one of sickness, the other of sorrow. It happened that I passed not alone, but with a companion, a practised English joiner, who, while these people were dying of cold, had been employed from six in the morning to six of the evening, for two months, in fitting the panels without nails, of a single door in a large house in London. Three days of his work taken, at the right time, from the oak panels, and applied to the larch timbers, would have saved these Savoyards' lives. He would have been maintained equally; (I suppose him equally paid for his work by the owner of the greater house, only the work not consumed selfishly on his own walls;) and the two peasants, and eventually, probably their children, saved.

There are, therefore, let me finally enforce, and leave with the reader this broad conclusion,—three things to be considered in employing any poor person. It is not enough to give him employment. You must employ him first to produce useful things; secondly, of the several (suppose equally useful) things he can equally well produce, you must set him to make that which will cause him to lead the healthiest life; lastly, of the things produced, it remains a question of wisdom and conscience how much you are to take yourself, and how much to leave to others. A large quantity, remember, unless you destroy it, *must* always be so left at one time or another; the only questions you have to decide are, not what

you will give, and what you will keep, but when, and how, and to whom, you will give. The natural law of human life is, of course, that in youth a man shall labour and lay by store for his old age, and when age comes, should use what he has laid by, gradually slackening his toil, and allowing himself more frank use of his store, taking care always to leave himself as much as will surely suffice for him beyond any possible length of life. What he has gained, or by tranquil and unanxious toil continues to gain, more than is enough for his own need, he ought so to administer, while he yet lives, as to see the good of it again beginning, in other hands; for thus he has himself the greatest sum of pleasure from it, and faithfully uses his sagacity in its control. Whereas most men, it appears, dislike the sight of their fortunes going out into service again, and say to themselves,—"I can indeed nowise prevent this money from falling at last into the hands of others, nor hinder the good of it, such as it is, from becoming theirs, not mine; but at least let a merciful death save me from being a witness of their satisfaction; and may God so far be gracious to me as to let no good come of any of this money of mine before my eyes." Supposing this feeling unconquerable, the safest way of rationally indulging it would be for the capitalist at once to spend all his fortune on himself, which might actually, in many cases, be quite the rightest as well as the pleasantest thing to do, if he had just tastes and worthy passions. But, whether for himself only, or through the hands and for the sake of others also, the law of wise life is, that the maker of the money should also be the spender of it, and spend it, approximately, all, before he dies; so that his true ambition as an economist should be, to die, not as rich, but as poor, as possible, calculating the ebb tide of possession in true and calm proportion to the ebb tide of life. Which law, checking the wing of accumulative desire in the mid volley,[1] and leading to peace of possession and fulness of fruition in old age, is also

[1] "He who spends for all that is noble, and gains by nothing but what is just, will hardly be notably wealthy, or distressfully poor."—*Laws*, v. 42.

wholesome, in that by the freedom of gift, together with present help and counsel, it at once endears and dignifies age in the sight of youth, which then no longer strips the bodies of the dead, but receives the grace of the living. Its chief use would (or will be, for men are indeed capable of attaining to this much use of their reason), that some temperance and measure will be put to the acquisitiveness of commerce.[1] For as things stand, a man holds it his duty to be temperate in his food, and of his body, but for no duty to be temperate in his riches, and of his mind. He sees that he ought not to waste his youth and his flesh for luxury; but he will waste his age, and his soul, for money, and think it no wrong, nor the *delirium tremens* of the intellect any evil. But the law of life is, that a man should fix the sum he desires to make annually, as the food he desires to eat daily; and stay when he has reached the limit, refusing increase of business, and leaving it to others, so obtaining due freedom of time for better thoughts. How the gluttony of business is punished, a bill of health for the principals of the richest city houses, issued annually, would show in a sufficiently impressive manner.

I know, of course, that these statements will be received by the modern merchant as an active border rider of the sixteenth century would have heard of its being proper for men of the Marches to get their living by the spade instead of the spur. But my business is only to state veracities and necessities; I neither look for the acceptance of the one, nor promise anything for the nearness of the other. Near or distant, the day will assuredly come when the merchants of a state shall be its true "ministers of exchange," its porters, in the double sense of carriers and gate-keepers, bringing all lands into frank and faithful communication, and knowing

[1] The fury of modern trade arises chiefly out of the possibility of making sudden fortune by largeness of transaction, and accident of discovery or contrivance. I have no doubt that the final interest of every nation is to check the action of these commercial lotteries; and that all great accidental gains or losses should be national,—not individual. But speculation absolute, unconnected with commercial effort, is an unmitigated evil in a state and the root of countless evils beside.

for their master of guild, Hermes the herald, instead of Mercury the gain-guarder.

And now, finally, for immediate rule to all whom it concerns.

The distress of any population means that they need food, house-room, clothes, and fuel. You can never, therefore, be wrong in employing any labourer to produce food, house-room, clothes, or fuel: but you are *always* wrong if you employ him to produce nothing, (for then some other labourer must be worked double time to feed him); and you are generally wrong, at present, if you employ him (unless he can do nothing else) to produce works of art, or luxuries; because modern art is mostly on a false basis, and modern luxury is criminally great.[1]

The way to produce more food is mainly to bring in fresh ground, and increase facilities of carriage;—to break rock, exchange earth, drain the moist, and water the dry, to mend roads, and build harbours of refuge. Taxation thus spent will annihilate taxation, but spent in war, it annihilates revenue.

The way to produce house-room is to apply your force first to the humblest dwellings. When your bricklayers are

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[1] It is especially necessary that the reader should keep his mind fixed on the methods of consumption and destruction, as the true sources of national poverty. Men are apt to watch rather the exchanges in a state than its damages; but the exchanges are only of importance so far as they bring about these last. A large number of the purchases made by the richer classes are mere forms of interchange of unused property, wholly without effect on national prosperity. It matters nothing to the state whether, if a china pipkin be rated as worth a hundred pounds, A has the pipkin and B the pounds, or A the pounds and B the pipkin. But if the pipkin is pretty, and A or B breaks it, there is national loss, not otherwise. So again, when the loss has really taken place, no shifting of the shoulders that bear it will do away with the fact of it. There is an intensely ludicrous notion in the public mind respecting the abolishment of debt by denying it. When a debt is denied, the lender loses instead of the borrower, that is all; the loss is precisely, accurately, everlastingly the same. The Americans borrow money to spend in blowing up their own houses. They deny their debt; by one third already, gold being at fifty premium; and will probably deny it wholly. That merely means that the holders of the notes are to be the losers instead of the issuers. The quantity of loss is precisely equal, and irrevocable; it is the quantity of human industry spent in explosion, plus the quantity of goods exploded. Honour only decides *who* shall pay the sum lost, not whether it is to be paid or not. Paid it must be, and to the uttermost farthing.

out of employ, do not build splendid new streets, but better the old ones; send your paviours and slaters to the poorest villages, and see that your poor are healthily lodged before you try your hand on stately architecture. You will find its stateliness rise better under the trowel afterwards; and we do not yet build so well as that we need hasten to display our skill to future ages. Had the labour which has decorated the Houses of Parliament filled, instead, rents in walls and roofs throughout the county of Middlesex; and our deputies met to talk within massive walls that would have needed no stucco for five hundred years,—the decoration might have been better afterwards, and the talk now. And touching even our highly conscientious church building, it may be well to remember that in the best days of church plans, their masons called themselves "logeurs du bon Dieu;" and that since, according to the most trusted reports, God spends a good deal of His time in cottages as well as in churches, He might perhaps like to be a little better lodged there also.

The way to get more clothes is—not, necessarily, to get more cotton. There were words written twenty years ago which would have saved many of us some shivering had they been minded in time. Shall we read them?

"The Continental people, it would seem, are importing our machinery, beginning to spin cotton and manufacture for themselves, to cut us out of this market and then out of that! Sad news indeed; but irremediable. By no means the saddest news—the saddest news is, that we should find our national existence, as I sometimes hear it said, depend on selling manufactured cotton at a farthing an ell cheaper than any other people. A most narrow stand for a great nation to base itself on! A stand which, with all the Corn-Law abrogations conceivable, I do not think will be capable of enduring.

"My friends, suppose we quitted that stand; suppose we came honestly down from it and said—'This is our minimum of cotton prices; we care not, for the present, to make cotton any cheaper. Do you, if it seem so blessed to you, make

cotton cheaper. Fill your lungs with cotton fur, your heart with copperas fumes, with rage and mutiny; become ye the general gnomes of Europe, slaves of the lamp!' I admire a nation which fancies it will die if it do not undersell all other nations to the end of the world. Brothers, we will cease to undersell them; we will be content to equal-sell them; to be happy selling equally with them! I do not see the use of underselling them: cotton-cloth is already two-pence a yard, or lower; and yet bare backs were never more numerous among us. Let inventive men cease to spend their existence incessantly contriving how cotton can be made cheaper; and try to invent a little how cotton at its present cheapness could be somewhat justlier divided among us.

"Let inventive men consider—whether the secret of this universe does after all consist in making money. With a hell which means—'failing to make money, I do not think there is any heaven possible that would suit one well. In brief, all this Mammon gospel of supply-and-demand, competition, *laissez faire*, and devil take the hindmost' (foremost, is it not, rather, Mr. Carlyle?), 'begins to be one of the shabbiest gospels ever preached.'" (In the matter of clothes, decidedly.)

The way to produce more fuel is first to make your coal mines safer, by sinking more shafts; then set all your convicts to work in them, and if, as is to be hoped, you succeed in diminishing the supply of that sort of labourer, consider what means there may be, first of growing forest where its growth will improve climate; then of splintering the forests which now make continents of fruitful land pathless and poisonous, into faggots for fire;—so gaining at once dominion sunwards and icewards. Your steam power has been given you (you will find eventually) for work such as that; and not for excursion trains, to give the labourer a moment's breath, at the peril of his breath for ever, from amidst the cities which you have crushed into masses of corruption. When you know how to build cities, and how to rule them, you will be able to breathe in their streets, and the "excur-

sion" will be the afternoon's walk or game in the fields round them. Long ago, Claudian's peasant of Verona knew, and we must yet learn, in his fashion, the difference between *via* and *vita*.

"But nothing of this work will pay?"

No; no more than it pays to dust your rooms, or wash your doorsteps. It will pay; not at first in currency, but in that which is the end and the source of currency,—in life; (and in currency richly afterwards). It will pay in that which is more than life,—in "God's first creature, which was light," whose true price has not yet been reckoned in any currency, and yet into the image of which all wealth, one way or other, must be cast. For your riches must either be as the lightning, which,

> begot but in a cloud,
> Though shining bright, and speaking loud,
> Whilst it begins, concludes its violent race;
> And, where it gilds, it wounds the place;

or else as the lightning of the sacred sign, which shines from one part of the heaven to the other. There is no other choice; you must either take dust for deity, spectre for possession, fettered dream for life, and for epitaph, this reversed verse of the great Hebrew hymn of economy (Psalm cxii.): —"He hath gathered together, he hath stripped the poor, his iniquity remaineth for ever." Or else, having the sun of justice to shine on you, and the sincere substance of good in your possession, and the pure law and liberty of life within you, leave men to write this better legend over your grave:—

"He hath dispersed abroad. He hath given to the poor. His righteousness remaineth for ever."

WAR

WAR

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH

YOUNG SOLDIERS, I do not doubt but that many of you came unwillingly to-night, and many in merely contemptuous curiosity, to hear what a writer on painting could possibly say, or would venture to say, respecting your great art of war. You may well think within yourselves, that a painter might, perhaps without immodesty, lecture younger painters upon painting, but not young lawyers upon law, nor young physicians upon medicine—least of all, it may seem to you, young warriors upon war. And, indeed, when I was asked to address you, I declined at first, and declined long; for I felt that you would not be interested in my special business, and would certainly think there was small need for me to come to teach you yours. Nay, I knew that there ought to be *no* such need, for the great veteran soldiers of England are now men every way so thoughtful, so noble, and so good, that no other teaching than their knightly example, and their few words of grave and tried counsel, should be either necessary for you, or even, without assurance of due modesty in the offerer, endured by you.

But being asked, not once nor twice, I have not ventured persistently to refuse; and I will try, in very few words, to lay before you some reason why you should accept my excuse, and hear me patiently. You may imagine that your work is wholly foreign to, and separate from mine. So far from that, all the pure and noble arts of peace are founded on war; no great art ever yet rose on earth, but among a nation of soldiers. There is no art among a shepherd people,

if it remains at peace. There is no art among an agricultural people, if it remains at peace. Commerce is barely consistent with fine art; but cannot produce it. Manufacture not only is unable to produce it, but invariably destroys whatever seeds of it exist. There is no great art possible to a nation but that which is based on battle.

Now, though I hope you love fighting for its own sake, you must, I imagine, be surprised at my assertion that there is any such good fruit of fighting. You supposed, probably, that your office was to defend the works of peace, but certainly not to found them: nay, the common course of war, you may have thought, was only to destroy them. And truly, I, who tell you this of the use of war, should have been the last of men to tell you so, had I trusted my own experience only. Hear why: I have given a considerable part of my life to the investigation of Venetian painting; and the result of that enquiry was my fixing upon one man as the greatest of all Venetians, and therefore, as I believed, of all painters whatsoever. I formed this faith, (whether right or wrong matters at present nothing,) in the supremacy of the painter Tintoret, under a roof covered with his pictures; and of those pictures, three of the noblest were then in the form of shreds of ragged canvas, mixed up with the laths of the roof, rent through by three Austrian shells. Now, it is not every lecturer who *could* tell you that he had seen three of his favourite pictures torn to rags by bomb-shells. And after such a sight, it is not every lecturer who *would* tell you that, nevertheless, war was the foundation of all great art.

Yet the conclusion is inevitable, from any careful comparison of the states of great historic races at different periods. Merely to show you what I mean, I will sketch for you, very briefly, the broad steps of the advance of the best art of the world. The first dawn of it is in Egypt; and the power of it is founded on the perpetual contemplation of death, and of future judgment, by the mind of a nation

of which the ruling caste were priests, and the second, soldiers. The greatest works produced by them are sculptures of their kings going out to battle, or receiving the homage of conquered armies. And you must remember also, as one of the great keys to the splendour of the Egyptian nation, that the priests were not occupied in theology only. Their theology was the basis of practical government and law; so that they were not so much priests as religious judges; the office of Samuel, among the Jews, being as nearly as possible correspondent to theirs.

All the rudiments of art then, and much more than the rudiments of all science, are laid first by this great warrior-nation, which held in contempt all mechanical trades, and in absolute hatred the peaceful life of shepherds. From Egypt art passes directly into Greece, where all poetry, and all painting, are nothing else than the description, praise, or dramatic representation of war, or of the exercises which prepare for it, in their connection with offices of religion. All Greek institutions had first respect to war; and their conception of it, as one necessary office of all human and divine life, is expressed simply by the images of their guiding gods. Apollo is the god of all wisdom of the intellect; he bears the arrow and the bow, before he bears the lyre. Again, Athena is the goddess of all wisdom in conduct. Yet it is by the helmet and the shield, oftener than by the shuttle, that she is distinguished from other deities.

There were, however, two great differences in principles between the Greek and the Egyptian theories of policy. In Greece there was no soldier caste; every citizen was necessarily a soldier. And, again, while the Greeks rightly despised mechanical arts as much as the Egyptians, they did not make the fatal mistake of despising agricultural and pastoral life; but perfectly honoured both. These two conditions of truer thought raise them quite into the highest rank of wise manhood that has yet been reached; for all our great arts, and nearly all our great thoughts, have been bor-

rowed or derived from them. Take away from us what they have given; and I hardly can imagine how low the modern European would stand.

Now, you are to remember, in passing to the next phase of history, that though you *must* have war to produce art —you must also have much more than war; namely, an art-instinct or genius in the people; and that, though all the talent for painting in the world won't make painters of you, unless you have a gift for fighting as well, you may have the gift for fighting, and none for painting. Now, in the next great dynasty of soldiers, the art-instinct is wholly wanting. I have not yet investigated the Roman character enough to tell you the causes of this; but I believe, paradoxical as it may seem to you, that, however truly the Roman might say of himself that he was born of Mars, and suckled by the wolf, he was nevertheless, at heart, more of a farmer than a soldier. The exercises of war were with him practical, not poetical; his poetry was in domestic life only, and the object of battle, *pacis imponere morem.* And the arts are extinguished in his hands, and do not rise again, until, with Gothic chivalry, there comes back into the mind of Europe a passionate delight in war itself, for the sake of war. And then, with the romantic knighthood which can imagine no other noble employment,—under the fighting kings of France, England, and Spain; and under the fighting dukeships and citizenships of Italy, art is born again, and rises to her height in the great valleys of Lombardy and Tuscany, through which there flows not a single stream, from all their Alps or Apennines, that did not once run dark red from battle: and it reaches its culminating glory in the city which gave to history the most intense type of soldiership yet seen among men;—the city whose armies were led in their assault by their king, led through it to victory by their king, and so led, though that king of theirs was blind, and in the extremity of his age.

And from this time forward, as peace is established or extended in Europe, the arts decline. They reach an un-

paralleled pitch of costliness, but lose their life, enlist themselves at last on the side of luxury and various corruption, and, among wholly tranquil nations, wither utterly away; remaining only in partial practice among races who, like the French and us, have still the minds, though we cannot all live the lives, of soldiers.

"It may be so," I can suppose that a philanthropist might exclaim. "Perish then the arts, if they can flourish only at such a cost. What worth is there in toys of canvas and stone, if compared to the joy and peace of artless domestic life?" And the answer is—truly, in themselves, none. But as expressions of the highest state of the human spirit, their worth is infinite. As results they may be worthless, but, as signs, they are above price. For it is an assured truth that, whenever the faculties of men are at their fullness, they *must* express themselves by art; and to say that a state is without such expression, is to say that it is sunk from its proper level of manly nature. So that, when I tell you that war is the foundation of all the arts, I mean also that it is the foundation of all the high virtues and faculties of men.

It was very strange to me to discover this; and very dreadful—but I saw it to be quite an undeniable fact. The common notion that peace and the virtues of civil life flourished together, I found to be wholly untenable. Peace and the *vices* of civil life only flourish together. We talk of peace and learning, and of peace and plenty, and of peace and civilisation; but I found that those were not the words which the Muse of History coupled together: that, on her lips, the words were—peace and sensuality, peace and selfishness, peace and corruption, peace and death. I found, in brief, that all great nations learned their truth of word, and strength of thought, in war; that they were nourished in war, and wasted by peace; taught by war, and deceived by peace; trained by war, and betrayed by peace;—in a word, that they were born in war, and expired in peace.

Yet now note carefully, in the second place, it is not *all*

war of which this can be said—nor all dragon's teeth, which, sown, will start up into men. It is not the ravage of a barbarian wolf-flock, as under Genseric or Suwarrow; nor the habitual restlessness and rapine of mountaineers, as on the old borders of Scotland; nor the occasional struggle of a strong peaceful nation for its life, as in the wars of the Swiss with Austria; nor the contest of merely ambitious nations for extent of power, as in the wars of France under Napoleon, or the just terminated war in America. None of these forms of war build anything but tombs. But the creative or foundational war is that in which the natural restlessness and love of contest among men are disciplined, by consent, into modes of beautiful—though it may be fatal—play: in which the natural ambition and love of power of men are disciplined into the aggressive conquest of surrounding evil: and in which the natural instincts of self-defence are sanctified by the nobleness of the institutions, and purity of the households, which they are appointed to defend. To such war as this all men are born; in such war as this any man may happily die; and forth from such war as this have arisen, throughout the extent of past ages, all the highest sanctities and virtues of humanity.

I shall therefore divide the war of which I would speak to you into three heads. War for exercise or play; war for dominion; and, war for defence.

I. And first, of war for exercise or play. I speak of it primarily in this light, because, through all past history, manly war has been more an exercise than anything else, among the classes who cause, and proclaim it. It is not a game to the conscript, or the pressed sailor; but neither of these are the causers of it. To the governor who determines that war shall be, and to the youths who voluntarily adopt it as their profession, it has always been a grand pastime; and chiefly pursued because they had nothing else to do. And this is true without any exception. No king whose mind was fully occupied with the development of the inner resources of his kingdom, or with any other sufficing sub-

ject of thought, ever entered into war but on compulsion. No youth who was earnestly busy with any peaceful subject of study, or set on any serviceable course of action, ever voluntarily became a soldier. Occupy him, early and wisely, in agriculture or business, in science or in literature, and he will never think of war otherwise than as a calamity. But leave him idle; and, the more brave and active and capable he is by nature, the more he will thirst for some appointed field for action; and find, in the passion and peril of battle, the only satisfying fulfilment of his unoccupied being. And from the earliest incipient civilisation until now, the population of the earth divides itself, when you look at it widely, into two races; one of workers, and the other of players—one tilling the ground, manufacturing, building, and otherwise providing for the necessities of life; —the other part proudly idle, and continually therefore needing recreation, in which they use the productive and laborious orders partly as their cattle, and partly as their puppets or pieces in the game of death.

Now, remember, whatever virtue or goodliness there may be in this game of war, rightly played, there is none when you thus play it with a multitude of small human pawns.

If you, the gentlemen of this or any other kingdom, choose to make your pastime of contest, do so, and welcome; but set not up these unhappy peasant-pieces upon the green fielded board. If the wager is to be of death, lay it on your own heads, not theirs. A goodly struggle in the Olympic dust, though it be the dust of the grave, the gods will look upon, and be with you in; but they will not be with you, if you sit on the sides of the amphitheatre, whose steps are the mountains of earth, whose arena its valleys, to urge your peasant millions into gladiatorial war. You also, you tender and delicate women, for whom, and by whose command, all true battle has been, and must ever be; you would perhaps shrink now, though you need not, from the thought of sitting as queens above set lists where the jousting game might be mortal. How much more, then, ought

you to shrink from the thought of sitting above a theatre pit in which even a few condemned slaves were slaying each other only for your delight! And do you *not* shrink from the *fact* of sitting above a theatre pit, where,—not condemned slaves,—but the best and bravest of the poor sons of your people, slay each other,—not man to man,—as the coupled gladiators; but race to race, in duel of generations? You would tell me, perhaps, that you do not sit to see this; and it is indeed true, that the women of Europe—those who have no heart-interest of their own at peril in the contest—draw the curtains of their boxes, and muffle the openings; so that from the pit of the circus of slaughter there may reach them only at intervals a half-heard cry and a murmur as of the wind's sighing, when myriads of souls expire. They shut out the death-cries; and are happy, and talk wittily among themselves. That is the utter literal fact of what our ladies do in their pleasant lives.

Nay, you might answer, speaking for them—"We do not let these wars come to pass for our play, nor by our carenessness; we cannot help them. How can any final quarrel of nations be settled otherwise than by war?" I cannot now delay, to tell you how political quarrels might be otherwise settled. But grant that they cannot. Grant that no law of reason can be understood by nations; no law of justice submitted to by them: and that, while questions of a few acres, and of petty cash, can be determined by truth and equity, the questions which are to issue in the perishing or saving of kingdoms can be determined only by the truth of the sword, and the equity of the rifle. Grant this, and even then, judge if it will always be necessary for you to put your quarrel into the hearts of your poor, and sign your treaties with peasants' blood. You would be ashamed to do this in your own private position and power. Why should you not be ashamed also to do it in public place and power? If you quarrel with your neighbour, and the quarrel be indeterminable by law, and mortal, you and he do not send your footmen to Battersea fields to fight it out; nor do you

set fire to his tenants' cottages, nor spoil their goods. You fight out your quarrel yourselves, and at your own danger, if at all. And you do not think it materially affects the arbitrement that one of you has a larger household than the other; so that, if the servants or tenants were brought into the field with their masters, the issue of the contest could not be doubtful? You either refuse the private duel, or you practise it under laws of honour, not of physical force; that so it may be, in a manner, justly concluded. Now the just or unjust conclusion of the private feud is of little moment, while the just or unjust conclusion of the public feud is of eternal moment: and yet, in this public quarrel, you take your servants' sons from their arms to fight for it, and your servants' food from their lips to support it; and the black seals on the parchment of your treaties of peace are the deserted hearth and the fruitless field. There is a ghastly ludicrousness in this, as there is mostly in these wide and universal crimes. Hear the statement of the very fact of it in the most literal words of the greatest of our English thinkers:—

"What, speaking in quite unofficial language, is the net-purport and upshot of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Dumdrudge, usually some five-hundred souls. From these, by certain 'natural enemies' of the French there are successively selected, during the French war, say thirty able-bodied men. Dumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them; she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, amid much weeping and swearing, they are selected; all dressed in red; and shipped away, at the public charges, some two thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain; and fed there till wanted.

"And now to that same spot in the south of Spain are

thirty similar French artisans, from a French Dumdrudge, in like manner wending; till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxta-position; and Thirty stands fronting Thirty, each with a gun in his hand.

"Straightway the word 'Fire!' is given, and they blow the souls out of one another, and in place of sixty brisk useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcases, which it must bury, and anon shed tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart; were the entirest strangers; nay, in so wide a universe, there was even, unconsciously, by commerce, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their governors had fallen out; and instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot." (*Sartor Resartus.*)

Positively, then, gentlemen, the game of battle must not, and shall not, ultimately be played this way. But should it be played any way? Should it, if not by your servants, be practised by yourselves? I think, yes. Both history and human instinct seem alike to say, yes. All healthy men like fighting, and like the sense of danger; all brave women like to hear of their fighting, and of their facing danger. This is a fixed instinct in the fine race of them; and I cannot help fancying that fair fight is the best play for them; and that a tournament was a better game than a steeplechase. The time may perhaps come in France as well as here, for universal hurdle-races and cricketing: but I do not think universal "crickets" will bring out the best qualities of the nobles of either country. I use, in such question, the test which I have adopted, of the connection of war with other arts; and I reflect how, as a sculptor, I should feel, if I were asked to design a monument for a dead knight, in Westminster Abbey, with a carving of a bat at one end, and a ball at the other. It may be the remains in me only of savage Gothic prejudice; but I had rather carve it with a shield at one end, and a sword at the other. And this,

observe, with no reference whatever to any story of duty done, or cause defended. Assume the knight merely to have ridden out occasionally to fight his neighbour for exercise; assume him even a soldier of fortune, and to have gained his bread, and filled his purse, at the sword's point. Still, I feel as if it were, somehow, grander and worthier in him to have made his bread by sword play than any other play; I had rather he had made it by thrusting than by batting; —much more, than by betting. Much rather that he should ride war horses, than back race horses; and—I say it sternly and deliberately—much rather would I have him slay his neighbour, than cheat him.

But remember, so far as this may be true, the game of war is only that in which the *full personal power of the human creature* is brought out in management of its weapons. And this for three reasons:—

First, the great justification of this game is that it truly, when well played, determines *who is the best man;*—who is the highest bred, the most self-denying, the most fearless, the coolest of nerve, the swiftest of eye and hand. You cannot test these qualities wholly, unless there is a clear possibility of the struggle's ending in death. It is only in the fronting of that condition that the full trial of the man, soul and body, comes out. You may go to your game of wickets, or of hurdles, or of cards, and any knavery that is in you may stay unchallenged all the while. But if the play may be ended at any moment by a lance-thrust, a man will probably make up his accounts a little before he enters it. Whatever is rotten and evil in him will weaken his hand more in holding a sword hilt, than in balancing a billiard cue; and on the whole, the habit of living lightly hearted, in daily presence of death, always has had, and must have, a tendency both to the making and testing of honest men. But for the final testing, observe, you must make the issue of battle strictly dependent on fineness of frame, and firmness of hand. You must not make it the question, which of the combatants has the longest gun, or which has got behind the biggest tree,

or which has the wind in his face, or which has gunpowder made by the best chemists, or iron smelted with the best coal, or the angriest mob at his back. Decide your battle, whether of nations or individuals, on *those* terms;—and you have only multiplied confusion, and added slaughter to iniquity. But decide your battle by pure trial which has the strongest arm, and steadiest heart,—and you have gone far to decide a great many matters besides, and to decide them rightly.

And the other reasons for this mode of decision of cause, are the diminution both of the material destructiveness, or cost, and of the physical distress of war. For you must not think that in speaking to you in this, (as you may imagine,) fantastic praise of battle, I have overlooked the conditions weighing against me. I pray all of you, who have not read, to read with the most earnest attention, Mr. Helps' two essays, on War, and Government, in the first voume of the last series of *Friends in Council*. Everything that can be urged against war is there simply, exhaustively, and most graphically stated. And all, there urged, is true. But the two great counts of evil alleged against war by that most thoughtful writer, hold only against modern war. If you have to take away masses of men from all industrial employment,—to feed them by the labour of others,—to move them and provide them with destructive machines, varied daily in national rivalship of inventive cost; if you have to ravage the country which you attack,—to destroy, for a score of future years, its roads, its woods, its cities, and its harbours;—and if, finally, having brought masses of men, counted by hundreds of thousands, face to face, you tear those masses to pieces with jagged shot, and leave the fragments of living creatures, countlessly beyond all help of surgery, to starve and parch, through days of torture, down into clots of clay —what book of account shall record the cost of your work; —What book of judgment sentence the guilt of it?

That, I say, is *modern* war,—scientific war,—chemical and mechanic war,—worse even than the savage's poisoned arrow. And yet you will tell me, perhaps, that any other war than

this is impossible now. It may be so; the progress of science cannot, perhaps, be otherwise registered than by new facilities of destruction; and the brotherly love of our enlarging Christianity be only proved by multiplication of murder. Yet hear, for a moment, what war was, in Pagan and ignorant days;—what war might yet be, if we could extinguish our science in darkness, and join the heathen's practice to the Christian's theory. I read you this from a book which probably most of you know well, and all ought to know—Muller's *Dorians;*—but I have put the points I wish you to remember in closer connection than in his text.

"The chief characteristic of the warriors of Sparta was great composure and a subdued strength; the violence of Aristodemus and Isadas being considered as deserving rather of blame than praise; and these qualities in general distinguished the Greeks from the northern Barbarians, whose boldness always consisted in noise and tumult. For the same reason the Spartans *sacrificed to the Muses* before an action; these goddesses being expected to produce regularity and order in battle; as they *sacrificed on the same occasion in Crete to the god of love,* as the confirmer of mutual esteem and shame. Every man put on a crown, when the band of flute-players gave the signal for attack; all the shields of the line glittered with their high polish, and mingled their splendour with the dark red of the purple mantles, which were meant both to adorn the combatant, and to conceal the blood of the wounded; to fall well and decorously being an incentive the more to the most heroic valour. The conduct of the Spartans in battle denotes a high and noble disposition, which rejected all the extremes of brutal rage. The pursuit of the enemy ceased when the victory was completed; and after the signal for retreat had been given, all hostilities ceased. The spoiling of arms, at least during the battle, was also interdicted; and the consecration of the spoils of slain enemies to the gods, as, in general, all rejoicings for victory, were considered as ill-omened."

Such was the war of the greatest soldiers who prayed to heathen gods. What Christian war is, preached by Christian ministers, let any one tell you, who saw the sacred crowning, and heard the sacred flute-playing, and was inspired and sanctified by the divinely-measured and musical language, of any North American regiment preparing for its charge. And what is the relative cost of life in pagan and Christian wars, let this one fact tell you:—the Spartans won the decisive battle of Corinth with the loss of eight men; the victors at indecisive Gettysburg confess to the loss of 30,000.

II. I pass now to our second order of war, the commonest among men, that undertaken in desire of dominion. And let me ask you to think for a few moments what the real meaning of this desire of dominion is—first in the minds of kings —then in that of nations.

Now, mind you this first,—that I speak either about kings, or masses of men, with a fixed conviction that human nature is a noble and beautiful thing; not a foul nor a base thing. All the sin of men I esteem as their disease, not their nature; as a folly which may be prevented, not a necessity which must be accepted. And my wonder, even when things are at their worst, is always at the height which this human nature can attain. Thinking it high, I find it always a higher thing than I thought it; while those who think it low, find it, and will find it, always, lower than they thought it: the fact being, that it is infinite, and capable of infinite height and infinite fall; but the nature of it—and here is the faith which I would have you hold with me—the *nature* of it is in the nobleness, not in the catastrophe.

Take the faith in its utmost terms. When the captain of the *London* shook hands with his mate, saying, "God speed you! I will go down with my passengers," *that* I believe to be "human nature." He does not do it from any religious motive,—from any hope of reward, or any fear of punishment; he does it because he is a man. But when a mother, living among the fair fields of merry England, gives her two-year-old child to be suffocated under a mattress in her inner

room, while the said mother waits and talks outside; *that* I believe to be *not* human nature. You have the two extremes there, shortly. And you, men, and mothers, who are here face to face with me to-night, I call upon you to say which of these is human, and which inhuman,—which "natural" and which "unnatural"? Choose your creed at once, I beseech you:—choose it with unshaken choice,—choose it for ever. Will you take, for foundation of act and hope, the faith that this man was such as God made him, or that this woman was such as God made her? Which of them has failed from their nature,—from their present, possible, actual nature;—not their nature of long ago, but their nature of now? Which has betrayed it—falsified it? Did the guardian who died in his trust, die inhumanly, and as a fool; and did the murderess of her child fulfil the law of her being? Choose, I say; infinitude of choices hang upon this. You have had false prophets among you,—for centuries you have had them,—solemnly warned against them though you were; false prophets, who have told you that all men are nothing but fiends or wolves, half beast, half devil. Believe that, and indeed you may sink to that. But refuse that, have faith that God "made you upright," though *you* have sought out many inventions; so, you will strive daily to become more what your Maker meant and means you to be, and daily gives you also the power to be,—and you will cling more and more to the nobleness and virtue that is in you, saying, "My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go."

I have put this to you as a choice, as if you might hold either of these creeds you liked best. But there is in reality no choice for you; the facts being quite easily ascertainable. You have no business to *think* about this matter, or to choose in it. The broad fact is, that a human creature of the highest race, and most perfect as a human thing, is invariably both kind and true; and that as you lower the race, you get cruelty and falseness, as you get deformity: and this so steadily and assuredly, that the two great words which, in their first use, meant only perfection of race, have come, by conse-

quence of the invariable connection of virtue with the fine human nature, both to signify benevolence of disposition. The word generous, and the word gentle, both, in their origin, meant only "of pure race," but because charity and tenderness are inseparable from this purity of blood, the words which once stood only for pride, now stand as synonyms for virtue.

Now, this being the true power of our inherent humanity, and seeing that all the aim of education should be to develop this;—and seeing also what magnificent self-sacrifice the higher classes of men are capable of, for any cause that they understand or feel,—it is wholly inconceivable to me how well-educated princes, who ought to be of all gentlemen the gentlest, and of all nobles the most generous, and whose title of royalty means only their function of doing every man "*right*"—how these, I say, throughout history, should so rarely pronounce themselves on the side of the poor and of justice, but continually maintain themselves and their own interests by oppression of the poor, and by wresting of justice; and how this should be accepted as so natural, that the word loyalty, which means faithfulness to law, is used as if it were only the duty of a people to be loyal to their king, and not the duty of a king to be infinitely more loyal to his people. How comes it to pass that a captain will die with his passengers, and lean over the gunwale to give the parting boat its course; but that a king will not usually die with, much less *for*, his passengers—thinks it rather incumbent on his passengers, in any number, to die for *him*? Think, I beseech you, of the wonder of this. The sea captain, not captain by divine right, but only by company's appointment;—not a man of royal descent, but only a plebeian who can steer;—not with the eyes of the world upon him, but with feeble chance, depending on one poor boat, of his name being ever heard above the wash of the fatal waves;—not with the cause of a nation resting on his act, but helpless to save so much as a child from among the lost crowd with whom he

resolves to be lost,—yet goes down quietly to his grave, rather than break his faith to these few emigrants. But your captain by divine right,—your captain with the hues of a hundred shields of kings upon his breast,—your captain whose every deed, brave or base, will be illuminated or branded for ever before unescapable eyes of men,—your captain whose every thought and act are beneficent, or fatal, from sunrising to setting, blessing as the sunshine, or shadowing as the night, —this captain, as you find him in history, for the most part thinks only how he may tax his passengers, and sit at most ease in his state cabin!

For observe, if there had been indeed in the hearts of the rulers of great multitudes of men any such conception of work for the good of those under their command, as there is in the good and thoughtful masters of any small company of men, not only wars for the sake of mere increase of power could never take place, but our idea of power itself would be entirely altered. Do you suppose that to think and act even for a million of men, to hear their complaints, watch their weaknesses, restrain their vices, make laws for them, lead them, day by day, to purer life, is not enough for one man's work? If any of us were absolute lord only of a district of a hundred miles square, and were resolved on doing our utmost for it; making it feed as large a number of people as possible; making every clod productive, and every rock defensive, and every human being happy; should we not have enough on our hands think you? But if the ruler has any other aim than this; if, careless of the result of his interference, he desire only the authority to interfere; and, regardless of what is ill-done or well-done, cares only that it shall be done at his bidding;—if he would rather do two hundred miles' space of mischief, than one hundred miles' space of good, of course he will try to add to his territory; and to add illimitably. But does he add to his power? Do you call it power in a child, if he is allowed to play with the wheels and bands of some vast engine, pleased with their murmur and

whirl, till his unwise touch, wandering where it ought not, scatters beam and wheel into ruin? Yet what machine is so vast, so incognisable, as the working of the mind of a nation; what child's touch so wanton, as the word of a selfish king? And yet, how long have we allowed the historian to speak of the extent of the calamity a man causes, as a just ground for his pride; and to extol him as the greatest prince, who is only the centre of the widest error. Follow out this thought by yourselves; and you will find that all power, properly so called, is wise and benevolent. There may be capacity in a drifting fireship to destroy a fleet; there may be venom enough in a dead body to infect a nation:—but which of you, the most ambitious, would desire a drifting kinghood, robed in consuming fire, or a poison-dipped sceptre whose touch was mortal? There is no true potency, remember, but that of help; nor true ambition, but ambition to save.

And then, observe farther, this true power, the power of saving, depends neither on multitude of men, nor on extent of territory. We are continually assuming that nations become strong according to their numbers. They indeed become so, if those numbers can be made of one mind; but how are you sure you can stay them in one mind, and keep them from having north and south minds? Grant them unanimous, how know you they will be unanimous in right? If they are unanimous in wrong, the more they are, essentially the weaker they are. Or, suppose that they can neither be of one mind, nor of two minds, but can only be of *no* mind? Suppose they are a mere helpless mob; tottering into precipitant catastrophe, like a waggon load of stones when the wheel comes off. Dangerous enough for their neighbours, certainly, but not "powerful."

Neither does strength depend on extent of territory, any more than upon number of population. Take up your maps when you go home this evening,—put the cluster of British Isles beside the mass of South America; and then consider whether any race of men need care how much ground they stand upon. The strength is in the men, and in their unity

and virtue, not in their standing room: a little group of wise hearts is better than a wilderness full of fools; and only that nation gains true territory, which gains itself.

And now for the brief practical outcome of all this. Remember, no government is ultimately strong, but in proportion to its kindness and justice; and that a nation does not strengthen, by merely multiplying and diffusing itself. We have not strengthened as yet, by multiplying into America. Nay, even when it has not to encounter the separating conditions of emigration, a nation need not boast itself of multiplying on its own ground, if it multiplies only as flies or locusts do, with the god of flies for its god. It multiplies its strength only by increasing as one great family, in perfect fellowship and brotherhood. And lastly, it does not strengthen itself by seizing dominion over races whom it cannot benefit. Austria is not strengthened, but weakened, by her grasp of Lombardy; and whatever apparent increase of majesty and of wealth may have accrued to us from the possession of India, whether these prove to us ultimately power or weakness, depends wholly on the degree in which our influence on the native race shall be benevolent and exalting. But, as it is at their own peril that any race extends their dominion in mere desire of power, so it is at their own still greater peril that they refuse to undertake aggressive war, according to their force, whenever they are assured that their authority would be helpful and protective. Nor need you listen to any sophistical objection of the impossibility of knowing when a people's help is needed, or when not. Make your national conscience clean, and your national eyes will soon be clear. No man who is truly ready to take part in a noble quarrel will ever stand long in doubt by whom, or in what cause, his aid is needed. I hold it my duty to make no political statement of any special bearing in this presence; but I tell you broadly and boldly, that, within these last ten years, we English have, as a knightly nation, lost our spurs: we have fought where we should not have fought, for gain; and we have been passive where we should not have been

passive, for fear. I tell you that the principle of non-intervention, as now preached among us, is as selfish and cruel as the worst frenzy of conquest, and differs from it only by being, not only malignant, but dastardly.

I know, however, that my opinions on this subject differ too widely from those ordinarily held, to be any farther intruded upon you; and therefore I pass lastly to examine the conditions of the third kind of noble war;—war waged simply for defence of the country in which we were born, and for the maintenance and execution of her laws, by whomsoever threatened or defied. It is to this duty that I suppose most men entering the army consider themselves in reality to be bound, and I want you now to reflect what the laws of mere defence are; and what the soldier's duty, as now understood, or supposed to be understood. You have solemnly devoted yourselves to be English soldiers, for the guardianship of England. I want you to feel what this vow of yours indeed means, or is gradually coming to mean. You take it upon you, first, while you are sentimental schoolboys; you go into your military convent, or barracks, just as a girl goes into her convent while she is a sentimental schoolgirl; neither of you then know what you are about, though both the good soldiers and good nuns make the best of it afterwards. You don't understand perhaps why I call you "sentimental" schoolboys, when you go into the army? Because, on the whole, it is the love of adventure, of excitement, of fine dress and of the pride of fame, all which are sentimental motives, which chiefly make a boy like going into the Guards better than into a counting-house. You fancy, perhaps, that there is a severe sense of duty mixed with these peacocky motives? And in the best of you, there is; but do not think that it is principal. If you cared to do your duty to your country in a prosaic and unsentimental way, depend upon it, there is now truer duty to be done in raising harvests, than in burning them; more in building houses, than in shelling them—more in winning money by your own work, wherewith to help men, than in taxing other people's work, for money

wherewith to slay men;—more duty finally, in honest and unselfish living than in honest and unselfish dying, though that seems to your boys' eyes the bravest. So far then, as for your own honour, and the honour of your families, you choose brave death in a red coat before brave life in a black one, you are sentimental; and now see what this passionate vow of yours comes to. For a little while you ride, and you hunt tigers or savages, you shoot, and are shot; you are happy, and proud, always, and honoured and wept if you die; and you are satisfied with your life, and with the end of it; believing, on the whole, that good rather than harm of it comes to others, and much pleasure to you. But as the sense of duty enters into your forming minds, the vow takes another aspect. You find that you have put yourselves into the hand of your country as a weapon. You have vowed to strike, when she bids you, and to stay scabbarded when she bids you; all that you need answer for is, that you fail not in her grasp. And there is goodness in this, and greatness, if you can trust the hand and heart of the Britomart who has braced you to her side, and are assured that when she leaves you sheathed in darkness, there is no need for your flash to the sun. But remember, good and noble as this state may be, it is a state of slavery. There are different kinds of slaves and different masters. Some slaves are scourged to their work by whips, others are scourged to it by restlessness or ambition. It does not matter what the whip is; it is none the less a whip, because you have cut thongs for it out of your own souls: the fact, so far, of slavery, is in being driven to your work without thought, at another's bidding. Again, some slaves are bought with money, and others with praise. It matters not what the purchase-money is. The distinguishing sign of slavery is to have a price, and be bought for it. Again, it matters not what kind of work you are set on; some slaves are set to forced diggings, others to forced marches; some dig furrows, others field-works, and others graves. Some press the juice of reeds, and some the juice of vines, and some the blood of men. The fact of the captivity is the same whatever

work we are set upon, though the fruits of the toil may be different. But, remember, in thus vowing ourselves to be the slaves of any master, it ought to be some subject of forethought with us, what work he is likely to put us upon. You may think that the whole duty of a soldier is to be passive, that it is the country you have left behind who is to command, and you have only to obey. But are you sure that you have left *all* your country behind, or that the part of it you have so left is indeed the best part of it? Suppose—and, remember, it is quite conceivable—that you yourselves are indeed the best part of England; that you, who have become the slaves, ought to have been the masters; and that those who are the masters, ought to have been the slaves! If it is a noble and whole-hearted England, whose bidding you are bound to do, it is well; but if you are yourselves the best of her heart, and the England you have left be but a half-hearted England, how say you of your obedience? You were too proud to become shop-keepers: are you satisfied then to become the servants of shop-keepers? You were too proud to become merchants or farmers yourselves: will you have merchants or farmers, then, for your field-marshals? You had no gifts of special grace for Exeter Hall: will you have some gifted person thereat for your commander-in-chief, to judge of your work, and reward it? You imagine yourselves to be the army of England: how if you should find yourselves, at last, only the police of her manufacturing towns, and the beadles of her little Bethels?

It is not so yet, nor will be so, I trust, for ever; but what I want you to see, and to be assured of, is, that the ideal of soldiership is not mere passive obedience and bravery; that, so far from this, no country is in a healthy state which has separated, even in a small degree, her civil from her military power. All states of the world, however great, fall at once when they use mercenary armies; and although it is a less instant form of error, (because involving no national taint of cowardice,) it is yet an error no less ultimately fatal—it is the error especially of modern times, of which we cannot

yet know all the calamitous consequences,—to take away the best blood and strength of the nation, all the soul-substance of it that is brave, and careless of reward, and scornful of pain, and faithful in trust; and to cast that into steel, and make a mere sword of it; taking away its voice and will; but to keep the worst part of the nation—whatever is cowardly, avaricious, sensual, and faithless—and to give to this the voice, to this the authority, to this the chief privilege, where there is least capacity, of thought. The fulfilment of your vow for the defence of England will by no means consist in carrying out such a system. You are not true soldiers, if you only mean to stand at a shop-door, to protect shop-boys who are cheating inside. A soldier's vow to his country is that he will die for the guardianship of her domestic virtue, of her righteous laws, and of her any-way challenged or endangered honour. A state without virtue, without laws, and without honour, he is bound *not* to defend; nay, bound to redress by his own right hand that which he sees to be base in her. So sternly is this the law of Nature and life, that a nation once utterly corrupt can only be redeemed by a military despotism—never by talking, nor by its free effort. And the health of any state consists simply in this; that in it, those who are wisest shall also be strongest; its rulers should be also its soldiers; or, rather, by force of intellect more than of sword, its soldiers also its rulers. Whatever the hold which the aristocracy of England has on the heart of England, in that they are still always in front of her battles, this hold will not be enough, unless they are also in front of her thoughts. And truly her thoughts need good captain's leading now, if ever! Do you know what, by this beautiful division of labour (her brave men fighting, and her cowards thinking), she has come at last to think? Here is a bit of a paper in my hand,[1] a good one too, and an honest

[1] I do not care to refer to the journal quoted, because the article was unworthy of its general tone, though in order to enable the audience to verify the quoted sentence, I left the number containing it on the table, when I gave this lecture. But a saying of Baron Liebig's, quoted at the head of a leader on the same subject in the *Daily Telegraph* of January 11, 1866,

one; quite representative of the best common public thought of England at this moment; and it is holding forth in one of its leaders upon our "social welfare,"—upon our "vivid life"—upon the "political supremacy of Great Britain." And what do you think all these are owing to? To what our English sires have done for us, and taught us, age after age? No: not to that. To our honesty of heart, or coolness of head, or steadiness of will? No: not to these. To our thinkers, or our statesmen, or our poets, or our captains, or our martyrs, or the patient labour of our poor? No: not to these; or at least not to these in any chief measure. Nay, says the journal, "more than any agency, it is the cheapness and abundance of our coal which have made us what we are." If it be so, then "ashes to ashes" be our epitaph! and the sooner the better. I tell you, Gentlemen of England, if ever you would have your country breathe the pure breath of heaven again, and receive again a soul into her body, instead of rotting into a carcase, blown up in the belly with carbonic acid (and great *that* way), you must think, and feel, for your England, as well as fight for her: you must teach her that all the true greatness she ever had, or ever can have, she won while her fields were green and her faces ruddy;—that greatness is still possible for Englishmen, even though the ground be not hollow under their feet, nor the sky black over their heads;—and that, when the day comes for their country to lay her honours in the dust, her crest will not rise from it more loftily because it is dust of coal. Gentlemen, I tell you, solemnly, that the day is coming when the soldiers of England must be her tutors; and the captains of her army, captains also of her mind.

And now, remember, you soldier youths, who are thus in

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summarily digests and presents the maximum folly of modern thought in this respect. "Civilisation," says the Baron, "is the economy of power, and English power is coal." Not altogether so, my chemical friend. Civilisation is the making of civil persons, which is a kind of distillation of which alembics are incapable, and does not at all imply the turning of a small company of gentlemen into a large company of ironmongers. And English power, (what little of it may be left) is by no means coal, but, indeed, of that which, "when the whole world turns to coal, then chiefly lives."

all ways the hope of your country; or must be, if she have any hope: remember that your fitness for all future trust depends upon what you are now. No good soldier in his old age was ever careless or indolent in his youth. Many a giddy and thoughtless boy has become a good bishop, or a good lawyer, or a good merchant; but no such an one ever became a good general. I challenge you, in all history, to find a record of a good soldier who was not grave and earnest in his youth. And, in general, I have no patience with people who talk about "the thoughtlessness of youth" indulgently. I had infinitely rather hear of thoughtless old age, and the indulgence due to *that*. When a man has done his work, and nothing can any way be materially altered in his fate, let him forget his toil, and jest with his fate, if he will; but what excuse can you find for wilfulness of thought, at the very time when every crisis of future fortune hangs on your decisions? A youth thoughtless! when all the happiness of his home for ever depends on the chances, or the passions, of an hour! A youth thoughtless! when the career of all his days depends on the opportunity of a moment! A youth thoughtless! when his every act is a foundation-stone of future conduct, and every imagination a fountain of life or death! Be thoughtless in *any* after years, rather than now—though, indeed, there is only one place where a man may be nobly thoughtless,—his deathbed. No thinking should ever be left to be done there.

Having, then, resolved that you will not waste recklessly, but earnestly use, these early days of yours, remember that all the duties of her children to England may be summed in two words—industry, and honour. I say first, industry, for it is in this that soldier youth are especially tempted to fail. Yet, surely, there is no reason, because your life may possibly or probably be shorter than other men's, that you should therefore waste more recklessly the portion of it that is granted you; neither do the duties of your profession, which require you to keep your bodies strong, in any wise involve the keeping of your minds weak. So far from that, the

experience, the hardship, and the activity of a soldier's life render his powers of thought more accurate than those of other men; and while, for others, all knowledge is often little more than a means of amusement, there is no form of science which a soldier may not at some time or other find bearing on business of life and death. A young mathematician may be excused for languor in studying curves to be described only with a pencil; but not in tracing those which are to be described with a rocket. Your knowledge of a wholesome herb may involve the feeding of any army; and acquaintance with an obscure point of geography, the success of a campaign. Never waste an instant's time, therefore; the sin of idleness is a thousand-fold greater in you than in other youths; for the fates of those who will one day be under your command hang upon your knowledge; lost moments now will be lost lives then, and every instant which you carelessly take for play, you buy with blood. But there is one way of wasting time, of all the vilest, because it wastes, not time only, but the interest and energy of your minds. Of all the ungentlemanly habits into which you can fall, the vilest is betting, or interesting yourselves in the issues of betting. It unites nearly every condition of folly and vice; you concentrate your interest upon a matter of chance, instead of upon a subject of true knowledge; and you back opinions which you have no grounds for forming, merely because they are your own. All the insolence of egotism is in this; and so far as the love of excitement is complicated with the hope of winning money, you turn yourselves into the basest sort of tradesmen—those who live by speculation. Were there no other ground for industry, this would be a sufficient one; that it protected you from the temptation to so scandalous a vice. Work faithfully, and you will put yourselves in possession of a glorious and enlarging happiness; not such as can be won by the speed of a horse, or marred by the obliquity of a ball.

First, then, by industry you must fulfil your vow to your country; but all industry and earnestness will be useless

unless they are consecrated by your resolution to be in all things men of honour; not honour in the common sense only, but in the highest. Rest on the force of the two main words in the great verse, *integer* vitæ, scelerisque *purus*. You have vowed your life to England; give it her wholly—a bright, stainless, perfect life—a knightly life. Because you have to fight with machines instead of lances, there may be a necessity for more ghastly danger, but there is none for less worthiness of character, than in olden time. You may be true knights yet, though perhaps not *equites;* you may have to call yourselves "canonry" instead of "chivalry," but that is no reason why you should not call yourselves true men. So the first thing you have to see to in becoming soldiers is that you make yourselves wholly true. Courage is a mere matter of course among any ordinarily well-born youths; but neither truth nor gentleness is matter of course. You must bind them like shields about your necks; you must write them on the tables of your hearts. Though it be not exacted of you, yet exact it of yourselves, this vow of stainless truth. Your hearts are, if you leave them unstirred, as tombs in which a god lies buried. Vow yourselves crusaders to redeem that sacred sepulchre. And remember, before all things—for no other memory will be so protective of you—that the highest law of this knightly truth is that under which it is vowed to women. Whomsoever else you deceive, whomsoever you injure, whomsoever you leave unaided, you must not deceive, nor injure, nor leave unaided, according to your power, any woman of whatever rank. Believe me, every virtue of the higher phases of manly character begins in this;—in truth and modesty before the face of all maidens; in truth and pity, or truth and reverence, to all womanhood.

And now let me turn for a moment to you,—wives and maidens, who are the souls of soldiers; to you,—mothers, who have devoted your children to the great hierarchy of war. Let me ask you to consider what part you have to take for the aid of those who love you; for if you fail in your part they cannot fulfil theirs; such absolute helpmates you are

that no man can stand without that help, nor labour in his own strength.

I know your hearts, and that the truth of them never fails when an hour of trial comes which you recognise for such. But you know not when the hour of trial first finds you, nor when it verily finds you. You imagine that you are only called upon to wait and to suffer; to surrender and to mourn. You know that you must not weaken the hearts of your husbands and lovers, even by the one fear of which those hearts are capable,—the fear of parting from you, or of causing you grief. Through weary years of separation; through fearful expectancies of unknown fate; through the tenfold bitterness of the sorrow which might so easily have been joy, and the tenfold yearning for glorious life struck down in its prime;—through all these agonies you fail not, and never will fail. But your trial is not in these. To be heroic in danger is little;—you are Englishwomen. To be heroic in change and sway of fortune is little;—for do you not love? To be patient through the great chasm and pause of loss is little;—for do you not still love in heaven? But to be heroic in happiness; to bear yourselves gravely and righteously in the dazzling of the sunshine of morning; not to forget the God in whom you trust, when He gives you most; not to fail those who trust you, when they seem to need you least; this is the difficult fortitude. It is not in the pining of absence, not in the peril of battle, not in the wasting of sickness, that your prayer should be most passionate, or your guardianship most tender. Pray, mothers and maidens, for your young soldiers in the bloom of their pride; pray for them, while the only dangers round them are in their own wayward wills; watch you, and pray, when they have to face, not death, but temptation. But it is this fortitude also for which there is the crowning reward. Believe me, the whole course and character of your lovers' lives is in your hands; what you would have them be, they shall be, if you not only desire to have them so, but deserve to have them so; for they are but mirrors in which you will see your-

selves imaged. If you are frivolous, they will be so also; if you have no understanding of the scope of their duty, they also will forget it; they will listen,—they *can* listen,—to no other interpretation of it than that uttered from your lips. Bid them be brave; they will be brave for you: bid them be cowards—and how noble soever they be—they will quail for you. Bid them be wise, and they will be wise for you; mock at their counsel, they will be fools for you: such and so absolute is your rule over them. You fancy, perhaps, as you have been told so often, that a wife's rule should only be over her husband's house, not over his mind. Ah, no! the true rule is just the reverse of that; a true wife in her husband's house, is his servant; it is in his heart that she is queen. Whatever of best he can conceive, it is her part to be; whatever of highest he can hope, it is hers to promise; all that is dark in him she must purge into purity; all that is failing in him she must strengthen into truth: from her, through all the world's clamour, he must win his praise; in her, through all the world's warfare, he must find his peace.

And, now, but one word more. You may wonder, perhaps, that I have spoken all this night in praise of war. Yet, truly, if it might be, I, for one, would fain join in the cadence of hammer-strokes that should beat swords into ploughshares: and that this cannot be, is not the fault of us men. It is *your* fault. Wholly yours. Only by your command, or by your permission, can any contest take place among us. And the real, final, reason for all the poverty, misery, and rage of battle, throughout Europe, is simply that you women, however good, however religious, however self-sacrificing for those whom you love, are too selfish and too thoughtless to take pains for any creature out of your own immediate circles. You fancy that you are sorry for the pain of others. Now I just tell you this, that if the usual course of war, instead of unroofing peasants' houses, and ravaging peasants' fields, merely broke the china upon your own drawing-room tables, no war in civilised countries would last a week. I tell you more, that at whatever moment you

chose to put a period to war, you could do it with less trouble than you take any day to go out to dinner. You know, or at least you might know if you would think, that every battle you hear of has made many widows and orphans. We have, none of us, heart enough truly to mourn with these. But at least we might put on the outer symbols of mourning with them. Let but every Christian lady who has conscience toward God, vow that she will mourn, at least outwardly, for His killed creatures. Your praying is useless, and your churchgoing mere mockery of God, if you have not plain obedience in you enough for this. Let every lady in the upper classes of civilised Europe simply vow that, while any cruel war proceeds, she will wear *black;*—a mute's black,—with no jewel, no ornament, no excuse for, or evasion into, prettiness—I tell you again, no war would last a week.

And lastly. You women of England are all now shrieking with one voice,—you and your clergymen together,—because you hear of your Bibles being attacked. If you choose to obey your Bibles, you will never care who attacks them. It is just because you never fulfil a single downright precept of the Book, that you are so careful for its credit: and just because you don't care to obey its whole words, that you are so particular about the letters of them. The Bible tells you to dress plainly,—and you are mad for finery; the Bible tells you to have pity on the poor,—and you crush them under your carriage wheels; the Bible tells you to do judgment and justice,—and you do not know, nor care to know, so much as what the Bible word "justice" means. Do but learn so much of God's truth as that comes to; know what He means when He tells you to be just: and teach your sons, that their bravery is but a fool's boast, and their deeds but a firebrand's tossing, unless they are indeed Just men, and Perfect in the Fear of God;—and you will soon have no more war, unless it be indeed such as is willed by Him, of whom, though Prince of Peace, it is also written, "In Righteousness He doth judge, and make war."

AGAINST THE CURRENT

AGAINST THE CURRENT

Brief Pronouncements on Various Subjects

The Dismal Non-Science

THE study which lately in England has been called Political Economy is in reality nothing more than the investigation of some accidental phenomena of modern commercial operations, nor has it been true in its investigation even of these. It has no connection whatever with political economy, as understood and treated of by the great thinkers of past ages; and as long as its unscholarly and undefined statements are allowed to pass under the same name, every word written on the subject by those thinkers—and chiefly the words of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero and Bacon—must be nearly useless to mankind.

Munera Pulveris

Intrinsic Wealth

The term wealth is never to be attached to the *accidental object of a morbid* desire, but only to the *constant object of a legitimate one*. By the fury of ignorance, and fitfulness of caprice, large interests may be continually attached to things unserviceable or hurtful; if their nature could be altered by our passions, the science of Political Economy would remain, what it has been hitherto among us, the weighing of clouds, and the portioning out of shadows. But of ignorance there is no science; and of caprice no law. Their disturbing forces interfere with the operations of faithful Economy, but have nothing in common with them: she, the calm arbitor of national destiny, regards only essential power

for good in all that she accumulates, and alike disdains the wanderings of imagination, and the thirsts of disease.

Munera Pulveris

Currency

In proportion as the habits of the nation become complex and fantastic (and they may be both, without therefore being civilized) its circulating medium must increase in proportion to its store. If every one wants a little of everything—if food must be of many kinds, and dress of many fashions—if multitudes live by work which, ministering to fancy, has its pay measured by fancy, so that large prices will be given by one person for what is valueless to another—if there are great inequalities of knowledge, causing great inequalities of estimate—and, finally, and worst of all, if the currency itself, from its largeness, and the power which the possession of it implies, becomes the sole object of desire with large numbers of the nation, so that the holding of it is disputed among them as the main object of life:—in each and all of these cases, the currency necessarily enlarges in proportion to the store; and as a means of exchange and division, as a bond of right, and as an object of passion, has a more and more important and malignant power over the nation's dealings, character and life.

Munera Pulveris

Setting Government to Work

We have not the least right to complain of our Government's being expensive, so long as we set the Government *to do precisely the work which brings no return.* If our present doctrines of political economy be just, let us trust them to the utmost; take that war business out of the Government's hands, and test therein the principles of supply and demand. Let our future sieges of Sebastopol be done by contract—no capture, no pay—(I admit that things might sometimes go better so); and let us sell the commands of our prospective battles, with our vicarages, to the lowest bidder;

so may we have cheap victories, and divinity. On the other hand, if we have so much suspicion of our science that we dare not trust it on military and spiritual business, would it not be but reasonable to try whether some authoritative handling may not prosper in matters utilitarian? If we were to set our government to do useful things instead of mischievous, possibly even the apparatus itself might in time come to be less costly. The machine, applied to the building of the house, might perhaps pay, when it seems not to pay, applied to pulling it down. If we made in our dockyard ships to carry timber and coals, instead of cannon, and with provision for the brightening of domestic solid culinary fire, instead of for the scattering of liquid hostile fire, it might have some effect on the taxes. Or suppose, that we tried the experiment on land instead of water carriage; already the Government, not unapproved, carries letters and parcels for us; larger packages may in time follow—even general merchandise—why not, at last, ourselves? Had the money spent in local mistakes and vain private litigation, on the railroads of England, been laid out, instead, under proper government restraint, on really useful railroad work, and had no absurd expense been incurred in ornamenting stations, we might already have had—what ultimately it will be found we must have—quadruple rails, two for passengers, and two for traffic, on every great line; and we might have been carried in swift safety, and watched and warded by well-paid pointsmen, for half the present fares. For, of course, a railroad company is merely an association of turnpike-keepers, who make the tolls as high as they can, not to mend the roads with, but to pocket. The public will in time discover this, and do away with turnpikes on railroads, as on all other public-ways.

Munera Pulveris

Proletariat

Supposing the rich to be entirely selfish, *it is always for their interest that the poor should be as numerous as they*

can employ, and restrain. For, granting that the entire population is no larger than the ground can easily maintain—that the classes are stringently divided—and that there is sense or strength of hand enough with the rich to secure obedience; then, if nine-tenths of a nation are poor, the remaining tenth have the service of nine persons each; but if eight-tenths are poor, only of four each; if seven-tenths are poor, of two and a third each; if six-tenths are poor of one and a half each; and if five-tenths are poor, of only one each. But, practically if the rich strive always to obtain more power over the poor, instead of to raise them—and if, on the other hand, the poor become continually more vicious and numerous, through neglect and oppression—though the *range* of the power of the rich increases, its *tenure* becomes less secure.

Munera Pulveris

Foreseeing Greenwich Village

If we were to be asked abruptly, and required to answer briefly, what qualities chiefly distinguish great artists from feeble artists, we should answer, I suppose, first, their sensibility and tenderness; secondly, their imagination; and thirdly, their industry. Some of us might, perhaps, doubt the justice of attaching so much importance to this last character, because we have all known clever men who were indolent, and dull men who were industrious. But though you may have known clever men who were indolent, you never knew a *great* man who was so; and, during such investigation as I have been able to give to the lives of the artists whose works are in all points noblest, no fact ever looms so large upon me—no law remains so steadfast in the universality of its application, as the fact and law that they are all great workers: nothing concerning them is matter of more astonishment than the quantity they have accomplished in the given length of their life; and when I hear a young man spoken of, as

giving promise of high genius, the first question I ask about him is always—

Does he work?

Sesame and Lilies

Fame and Reward

If you study wrongly, and try to draw the attention of the public upon you,—supposing you to be clever students —you will get swift reward; but the reward does not come fast when it is sought wisely; it is always held aloof for a little while; the right roads of early life are very quiet ones, hedged in from nearly all help or praise. But the wrong roads are noisy,—vociferous everywhere with all kinds of demand upon you for art which is not properly art at all; and in the various meetings of modern interests, money is to be made in every way; but art is to be followed only in *one* way.

Sesame and Lilies

Our Business and Eternal Life

I chiefly desired to question my hearers—operatives, merchants, and soldiers, as to the ultimate meaning of the *business* they had in hand; and to know from them what they expected or intended their manufacture to come to, their selling to come to, and their killing to come to. That appeared the first point needing determination before I could speak to them with any real utility or effect. "You craftsmen—salesmen—swordsmen,—do but tell me clearly what you want; then, if I can say anything to help you, I will; and if not, I will account to you as I best may for my inability." But in order to put this question into any terms, one had first of all to face the difficulty just spoken of—to me for the present insuperable,—the difficulty of knowing whether to address one's audience as believing, or not believing, in any other world than this. For if you address any average modern English company as believing in an Eternal life, and en-

deavour to draw any conclusions, from this assumed belief, as to their present business, they will forthwith tell you that "what you say is very beautiful, but it is not practical." If, on the contrary, you frankly address them as unbelievers in Eternal life, and try to draw any consequences from that unbelief,—they immediately hold you for an accursed person, and shake off the dust from their feet at you. And the more I thought over what I had got to say, the less I found I could say it, without some reference to this intangible or intractable part of the subject. It made all the difference, in asserting any principle of war, whether one assumed that a discharge of artillery would merely knead down a certain quantity of red clay into a level line, as in a brick-field; or whether, out of every separately Christian-named portion of the ruinous heap, there went out, into the smoke and dead-fallen air of battle, some astonished condition of soul, unwillingly released. It made all the difference, in speaking of the possible range of commerce, whether one assumed that all bargains related only to visible property—or whether property, for the present invisible, but nevertheless real, was elsewhere purchasable on other terms. It made all the difference, in addressing a body of men subject to considerable hardship, and having to find some way out of it—whether one could confidently say to them, "My friends,—you have only to die, and all will be right;" or whether one had any secret misgiving that such advice was more blessed to him that gave, than to him that took it. And therefore the deliberate reader will find, throughout these lectures a hesitation in driving points home, and a pausing short of conclusions which he will feel I would fain have come to; hesitation which arises wholly from this uncertainty of my hearers' temper. For I do not now speak, nor have I ever spoken, since the time of first forward youth, in any proselyting temper, as desiring to persuade any one of what, in such matters, I thought myself; but, whosoever I venture to address, I take for the time his creed as I find it; and endeavour to push it into such vital fruit as it seems capable of. Thus, it is a creed with a great

part of the existing English people, that they are in possession of a book which tells them, straight from the lips of God, all they ought to do, and need to know. I have read that book, with as much care as most of them, for some forty years; and am thankful that, on those who trust it, I can press its pleadings. My endeavour has been uniformly to make them trust it more deeply than they do; trust it, not in their own favourite verses only, but in the sum of all; trust it, not as a fetish or talisman, which they are to be saved by daily repetitions of; but as a Captain's order, to be heard and obeyed at their peril. I was always encouraged by supposing my hearers to hold such belief. To these, if to any, I once had hope of addressing, with acceptance, words which insisted on the guilt of pride, and the futility of avarice; from these, it from any, I once expected ratification of a political economy, which asserted that the life was more than the meat, and the body than raiment; and these, it once seemed to me, I might ask, without accusation of fanaticism, not merely in doctrine of the lips, but in the bestowal of their heart's treasure, to separate themselves from the crowd of whom it is written, "After all these things do the Gentiles seek."

It cannot, however, be assumed, with any semblance of reason, that a general audience is now wholly, or even in majority, composed of these religious persons. A large portion must always consist of men who admit no such creed; or who, at least, are inaccessible to appeals founded on it. And as, with the so-called Christian, I desired to plead for honest declaration and fulfilment of his belief in life,—with the so-called Infidel, I desire to plead for an honest declaration and fulfilment of his belief in death. The dilemma is inevitable. Men must either hereafter live, or hereafter die; fate may be bravely met, and conduct wisely ordered, on either expectation; but never in hesitation between ungrasped hope, and unconfronted fear. We usually believe in immortality, so far as to avoid preparation for death; and in mortality, so far as to avoid preparation for anything after death. Whereas, a wise man will at least hold himself prepared for one or

other of two events, of which one or other is inevitable; and will have all things in order, for his sleep, or in readiness, for his awakening.

Nor have we any right to call it an ignoble judgment, if he determine to put them in order, as for sleep. A brave belief in life is indeed an enviable state of mind, but, as far as I can discern, an unusual one. I know few Christians so convinced of the splendour of the rooms in their Father's house, as to be happier when their friends are called to those mansions, than they would have been if the Queen had sent for them to live at court: nor has the Church's most ardent "desire to depart, and be with Christ," ever cured it of the singular habit of putting on mourning for every person summoned to such departure. On the contrary, a brave belief in death has been assuredly held by many not ignoble persons, and it is a sign of the last depravity in the Church itself, when it assumes that such a belief is inconsistent with either purity of character, or energy of hand. The shortness of life is not, to any rational person, a conclusive reason for wasting the space of it which may be granted him; nor does the anticipation of death to-morrow suggest, to any one but a drunkard, the expediency of drunkenness to-day. To teach that there is no device in the grave, may indeed make the deviceless person more contented in his dulness; but it will make the deviser only more earnest in devising: nor is human conduct likely, in every case, to be purer, under the conviction that all its evil may in a moment be pardoned and all its wrong-doing in a moment redeemed; and that the sigh of repentance, which purges the guilt of the past, will waft the soul into a felicity which forgets its pain,—than it may be under the sterner, and to many not unwise minds, more probable, apprehension, that "what a man soweth that shall he also reap"—or others reap,—when he, the living seed of pestilence, walketh no more in darkness, but lies down therein.

But to men whose feebleness of sight, or bitterness of soul, or the offence given by the conduct of those who claim higher hope, may have rendered this painful creed the only

possible one, there is an appeal to be made, more secure in its ground than any which can be addressed to happier persons. I would fain, if I might offencelessly, have spoken to them as if none others heard; and have said thus: Hear me, you dying men, who will soon be deaf for ever. For these others, at your right hand and your left, who look forward to a state of infinite existence, in which all their errors will be overruled, and all their faults forgiven; for these, who, stained and blackened in the battle smoke of mortality, have but to dip themselves for an instant in the font of death, and to rise renewed of plumage, as a dove that is covered with silver, and her feathers like gold; for these, indeed, it may be permissible to waste their numbered moments, through faith in a future of innumerable hours; to these, in their weakness, it may be conceded that they should tamper with sin which can only bring forth fruit of righteousness, and profit by the iniquity which, one day, will be remembered no more. In them, it may be no sign of hardness of heart to neglect the poor, over whom they know their Master is watching; and to leave those to perish temporarily, who cannot perish eternally. But, for you, there is no such hope, and therefore no such excuse. This fate, which you ordain for the wretched, you believe to be all their inheritance; you may crush them, before the moth, and they will never rise to rebuke you;—their breath, which fails for lack of food, once expiring, will never be recalled to whisper against you a word of accusing;—they and you, as you think, shall lie down together in the dust, and the worms cover you;—and for them there shall be no consolation, and on you no vengeance,—only the question murmured above your grave: "Who shall repay him what he hath done?" Is it therefore easier for you in your heart to inflict the sorrow for which there is no remedy? Will you take, wantonly, this little all of his life from your poor brother, and make his brief hours long to him with pain? Will you be readier to the injustice which can never be redressed; and niggardly of mercy which you *can* bestow but once, and which, refusing, you refuse for ever? I think bet-

ter of you, even of the most selfish, than that you would do this, well understood. And for yourselves, it seems to me, the question becomes not less grave, in these curt limits. If your life were but a fever fit,—the madness of a night, whose follies were all to be forgotten in the dawn, it might matter little how you fretted away the sickly hours,—what toys you snatched at, or let fall,—what visions you followed wistfully with the deceived eyes of sleepless phrenzy. Is the earth only an hospital? Play, if you care to play, on the floor of the hospital dens. Knit its straw into what crowns please you; gather the dust of it for treasure, and die rich in that, clutching at the black motes in the air with your dying hands;—and yet, it may be well with you. But if this life be no dream, and the world no hospital; if all the peace and power and joy you can ever win, must be won now; and all fruit of victory gathered here, or never; will you still, throughout the puny totality of your life, weary yourselves in the fire for vanity? If there is no rest which remaineth for you, is there none you might presently take? was this grass of the earth made green for your shroud only, not for your bed? and can you never lie down *upon* it, but only *under* it? The heathen, to whose creed you have returned, thought not so. They knew that life brought its contest, but they expected from it also the crown of all contest: No proud one! no jewelled circlet flaming through Heaven above the height of the unmerited throne; only some few leaves of wild olive, cool to the tired brow, through a few years of peace. It should have been of gold, they thought; but Jupiter was poor; this was the best the god could give them. Seeking a greater than this, they had known it a mockery. Not in war, not in wealth, not in tyranny, was there any happiness to be found for them—only in kindly peace, fruitful and free. The wreath was to be of *wild* olive, mark you:—the tree that grows carelessly, tufting the rocks with no vivid bloom, no verdure of branch; only with soft snow of blossom, and scarcely fulfilled fruit, mixed with grey leaf and thorn-set stem; no fastening of diadem for you but with such sharp

embroidery! But this, such as it is, you may win while yet you live; type of grey honour and sweet rest. Free-heartedness, and graciousness, and undisturbed trust, and requited love, and the sight of the peace of others, and the ministry to their pain;—these, and the blue sky above you, and the sweet waters and flowers of the earth beneath; and mysteries and presences, innumerable, of living things,— these may yet be here your riches; untormenting and divine: serviceable for the life that now is; nor, it may be, without promise of that which is to come.

The Crown of Wild Olive

Requiring Perfection of the Poor

Nothing appears to me at once more ludicrous and more melancholy than the way the people of the present age usually talk about the morals of labourers. You hardly ever address a labouring man upon his prospects in life, without quietly assuming that he is to possess, at starting, as a small moral capital to begin with, the virtue of Socrates, the philosophy of Plato, and the heroism of Epaminondas. "Be assured, my good man,"—you say to him,—"that if you work steadily for ten hours a day all your life long, and if you drink nothing but water, or the very mildest beer, and live on very plain food, and never lose your temper, and go to church every Sunday, and always remain content in the position in which Providence has placed you, and never grumble, nor swear; and always keep your clothes decent, and rise early, and use every opportunity of improving yourself, you will get on very well, and never come to the parish."

Sesame and Lilies

The Crimes of Charity

"Why would witness not go into the workhouse?" you ask. Well, the poor seem to have a prejudice against the workhouse which the rich have not; for of course every one who takes a pension from Government goes into the workhouse on a

grand scale: only the workhouses for the rich do not involve the idea of work, and should be called play-houses. But the poor like to die independently, it appears; perhaps if we made the play-houses for them pretty and pleasant enough, or gave them their pensions at home, and allowed them a little introductory peculation with the public money, their minds might be reconciled to it. Meantime, here are the facts: we make our belief either so insulting to them, or so painful, that they rather die than take it at our hands; or, for third alternative, we leave them so untaught and foolish that they starve like brute creatures, wild and dumb, not knowing what to do, or what to ask.

Sesame and Lilies

Contempt of Poverty

Among the various characteristics of the age in which we live as compared with other ages of this not yet *very* experienced world, one of the most notable appears to me to be the just and wholesome contempt in which we hold poverty. I repeat, the *just* and *wholesome* contempt; though I see that some of my hearers look surprised at the expression. I assure them, I use it in sincerity; and I should not have ventured to ask you to listen to me this evening, unless I had entertained a profound respect for wealth—true wealth, that is to say; for, of course we ought to respect neither wealth nor anything else that is false of its kind: and the distinction between real and false wealth is one of the points on which I shall have a few words presently to say to you. But true wealth I hold, as I said, in great honour; and sympathize, for the most part, with that extraordinary feeling of the present age which publicly pays this honour to riches. I cannot, however, help noticing how extraordinary it is, and how this epoch of ours differs from all bygone epochs in having no philosophical nor religious worshippers of the ragged godship of poverty. In the classical ages, not only there were people who voluntarily lived in tubs, and who used gravely to maintain

the superiority of tub-life to town-life, but the Greeks and Latins seem to have looked on these eccentrics, and I do not scruple to say, absurd people, with as much respect as we do upon large capitalists and landed proprietors; so that really, in those days, no one could be described as purse proud, but only as empty-purse proud. And no less distinct than the honour which those curious Greek people pay to their conceited poor, is the disrespectful manner in which they speak of the rich; so that one cannot listen long either to them, or to the Roman writers who imitated them, without finding one's self entangled in all sorts of plausible absurdities; hard upon being convinced of the uselessness of collecting that heavy yellow substance which we call gold, and led generally to doubt all the most established maxims of political economy. Nor are matters much better in the middle ages. For the Greeks and Romans contented themselves with mocking at rich people, and constructing merry dialogues between Charon and Diogenes or Menippus, in which the ferryman and the cynic rejoiced together as they saw kings and rich men coming down to the shore of Acheron, in lamenting and lamentable crowds, casting their crowns into the dark waters, and searching sometimes in vain, for the last coin out of all their treasures that could ever be of use to them. But these Pagan views of the matter were indulgent, compared with those which were held in the middle ages, when wealth seems to have been looked upon by the best men not only as contemptible, but as criminal. The purse round the neck is, then, one of the principal signs of condemnation in the pictured Inferno; and the Spirit of Poverty is reverenced with subjection of heart, and faithfulness of affection, like that of a loyal knight for his lady, or a loyal subject to his queen. And truly, it requires some boldness to quit ourselves of these feelings, and to confess their partiality or their error, which, nevertheless, we are certainly bound to do. For wealth is simply one of the greatest powers which can be entrusted to human hands: a power, not indeed to be envied, because it seldom makes us happy; but still less to be abdicated or de-

spised; while, in these days, and in this country, it has become a power all the more notable, in that the possessions of a rich man are not represented, as they used to be, by wedges of gold or coffers of jewels, but by masses of men variously employed, over whose bodies and minds the wealth, according to its direction, exercises harmful or helpful influence, and becomes, in that alternative, mammon either of Unrighteousness or of Righteousness.

Unto this Last

Domestic Servants

To the Editor of "The Daily Telegraph."—Sir: You so seldom write nonsense, that you will, I am sure pardon your friends for telling you when you do. Your article on servants to-day is nonsense. It is just as easy and as difficult now to get good servants as it ever was. You may have them, as you may have pines and peaches, for the growing, or you may even buy them good, if you can persuade the good growers to spare you them off their walls; but you cannot get them by political economy and the law of supply and demand.

There are broadly two ways of making good servants; the first, a sound, wholesome, thoroughgoing slavery—which was the heathen way, and no bad one either, provided you understand that to make real "slaves" you must make yourself a real "master" (which is not easy). The second is the Christian's way: "Whoso delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become his son at the last." And as few people want their servants to become their sons, this is not always to their liking. So that, neither having courage or self-discipline enough on the one hand to make themselves nobly dominant after the heathen fashion, nor tenderness or justice enough to make themselves nobly protective after the Christian, the present public thinks to manufacture servants bodily out of powder and hay stuffing—mentally by early instillation of Catechism and other mechanics—religious appliances—and economically, as you help-

lessly suggest, by the law of supply and demand, with such results as we all see, and most of us more or less feel, and shall feel daily more and more to our cost and selfish sorrow.

Sir, there is only one way to have good servants; that is, to be worthy of being well served. All nature and all humanity will serve a good master, and rebel against an ignoble one. And there is no surer test of the quality of a nation than the quality of its servants, for they are their masters' shadows, and distort their faults in a flattened mimicry. A wise nation will have philosophers in its servants' hall; a knavish nation will have knaves there; and a kindly nation will have friends there. Only let it be remembered that "kindness" means as with your child, so with your servant, not indulgence, but care.—I am, Sir, seeing that you usually write good sense, and "serve" good causes, your servant to command.

Arrows of the Chace

Nationalization of Railroads

Neither the roads nor the railroads of any nation should belong to any private persons. All means of public transit should be provided at public expense, by public determination where such means are needed, and the public should be its own "shareholder."

Neither road, nor railroad, nor canal should ever pay dividends to anybody. They should pay their working expenses, and no more. All dividends are simply a tax on the traveller and the goods, levied by the person to whom the road or canal belongs, for the right of passing over his property. And this right should at once be purchased by the nation, and the original cost of the roadway—be it gravel, iron, or adamant—at once defrayed by the nation, and then the whole work of the carriage of persons or goods done for ascertained prices by salaried officers, as the carriage of letters is done now.

I believe, if the votes of the proprietors of all the railroads

in the kingdom were taken *en masse*, it would be found that the majority would gladly receive back their original capital, and cede their right of "revising" prices of railway tickets. And if railway property *is* a good and wise investment of capital, the public need not shrink from taking the whole off their hands. Let the public take it. (I, for one, who never held a rag of railroad scrip in my life, nor ever willingly travelled behind an engine where a horse could pull me, will most gladly subscribe my proper share for such purpose according to my income.) Then let them examine what lines pay their working expenses and what lines do not, and boldly leave the unpaying embankments to be white over with sheep, like Roman camps, take up the working lines on sound principles, pay their drivers and pointsmen well, keep their carriages clean and in good repair, and make it as wonderful a thing for a train as for an old mail-coach, to be behind its time; and the sagacious British public will very soon find its pocket heavier, its heart lighter, and its "passages" pleasanter, than any of the three have been, for many a day.

Arrows of the Chace

How the Rich Spend Their Money

To the Editor of "The Pall Mall Gazette."—Sir: I have my *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 28th to-day, and must at once, with your permission, solemnly deny the insidiousness of my question, "Where does the rich man get his means of living?" I don't see how a more straightforward question could be put! So straightforward indeed that I particularly dislike making a martyr of myself in answering it, as I must this blessed day—a martyr at least, in a way of witness; for if we rich people don't begin to speak honestly with our tongues, we shall, some day soon, lose them and our heads together, having for some time back, most of us, made false use of the one and none of the other. Well, for the point in question then, as to means of living: the most exemplary manner

of answer is simply to state how I got my own, or rather how my father got them for me. He and his partners entered into what your correspondent mellifluously styles "a mutually beneficent partnership," with certain labourers in Spain. These labourers produced from the earth annually a certain number of bottles of wine. These productions were sold by my father and his partners, who kept nine-tenths, or thereabouts, of the price themselves, and gave one-tenth or thereabouts to the labourers. In which state of mutual beneficence my father and his partners naturally became rich, and the labourers as naturally remained poor. Then my good father gave all his money to me (who never did a stroke of work in my life worth my salt, not to mention my dinner), and so far from finding his money "grow" in my hands I never try to buy anything with it; but people tell me "money isn't what it was in your father's time, everything is so much dearer." I should be heartily glad to learn from your correspondent as much pecuniary botany as will enable me to set my money agrowing; and in the mean time, as I have thus given a quite indubitable instance of my notions of the way money is made, will he be so kind as to give us, not an heraldic example of the dark ages (though I suspect I know more of the pedigree of money, if he comes to that, than he does), but a living example of a rich gentleman who *has* made his money by saving an *equal* portion of profit in some mutually beneficent partnership with his labourers?

Arrows of the Chace

We English as a Nation

We English, as a nation, know not, and care not to know, a single broad or basic principle of human justice. We have only our instincts to guide us. We will hit anybody again who hits us. We will take care of our own families and our own pockets; and we are characterized in our present phase of enlightenment mainly by rage in speculation, lavish expenditure on suspicion or panic, generosity whereon gen-

erosity is useless, anxiety for the souls of savages, regardlessness of those of civilised nations, enthusiasm for liberation of blacks, apathy to enslavement of whites, proper horror of regicide, polite respect for populicide, sympathy with those whom we can no longer serve, and reverence for the dead, whom we have ourselves delivered to death.

Arrows of the Chace

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